



Blacktown
City Council



THE HILLS
Sydney's Garden Shire



**Hawkesbury River
County Council**

ANNUAL REPORT 2019/2020

Hawkesbury River County Council
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

HAWKESBURY RIVER COUNTY COUNCIL AT A GLANCE	3
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT	4
REASON FOR ANNUAL REPORT	5
LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993	5
LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL) REGULATION 2005	5
HAWKESBURY RIVER COUNTY COUNCIL	6
BENEFITS OF A COUNTY COUNCIL FOR THE CONTROL OF WEEDS	7
THE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES	8
GUIDING STRATEGIES	9
ANNUAL OPERATIONAL RESULTS 2019-2020	10
TERRESTRIAL WEED CONTROL	10
AQUATIC WEED MANAGEMENT	16
MAPPING.....	21
NEW INCURSIONS	22
ROADSIDE NATIVE VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN	23
LANDCARE SUPPORT HOURS.....	25
PENRITH ROADSIDE GRANT	26
CROWN RESERVES GRANT	28
WEED CONTROL HIGHLIGHTS	30
INSPECTION PROGRAM.....	30
INSPECTION HIGHLIGHTS.....	35
COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND PUBLIC EDUCATION.....	36
COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND PUBLIC EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS	38
HAWKESBURY LANDCARE NETWORK.....	39
WEEDS DECLARED UNDER THE BIOSECURITY ACT (2015).....	45
PRIORITY WEED LIST HRCC	47
ADMINISTRATION	51
GOVERNANCE HIGHLIGHTS	55
HRCC ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE.....	56
PLANNING AND POLICY DOCUMENTS.....	57
MEMBER COUNCIL INFORMATION	59
MEMBER COUNCIL PROCESS	60
FINANCE, ACCOUNTING & ADMINISTRATION	61

HAWKESBURY RIVER COUNTY COUNCIL AT A GLANCE

Origin

Hawkesbury River County Council is a single-purpose authority for the control of declared priority weeds and came into existence in 1948 (Government Gazette of 24/9/1948)

Our Team

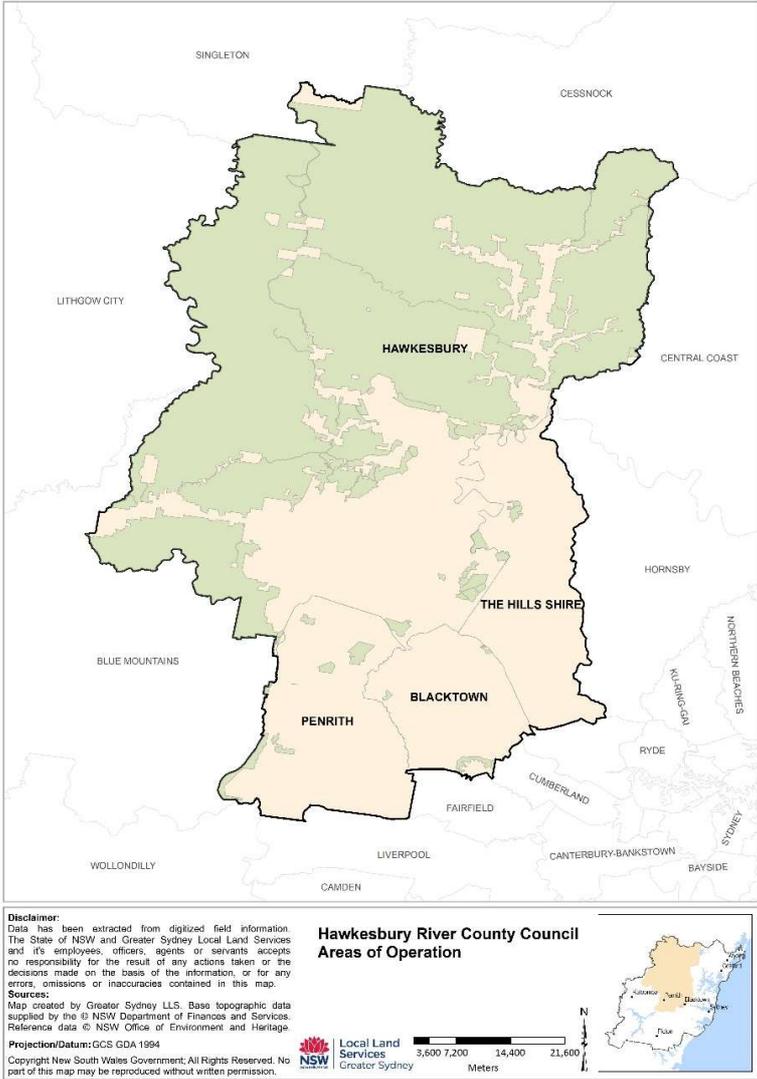
We are governed by a Board of 8 Council Members representing our 4 Member Councils. Our General Manager oversees a team of 12 staff in the areas of Operation, Project Management and Administration.

Our Area of Operations

We are the Local Weed Control Authority for the Councils of Blacktown City Council, Hawkesbury City Council, Penrith City Council and The Hills Shire Council which constitutes a combined County area of 3,823 square kilometres

Funding & Revenue

Funds are provided by equal levies upon the four constituent councils. The State Government provides additional grants in which Council must achieve specific outcomes. Charges are made for services and work performed for private land holders.



Cover page photo: skirting Cats claw creeper

Location

Council's Office and Works Depot is located at 6 Walker Street (Corner Dowling Place), South Windsor, NSW, 2756.

Postal Address: P.O Box 6021, South Windsor Delivery Centre, NSW 2756

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Website: www.hrcc.nsw.gov.au

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The last 12 months have been a year of unprecedented challenges and change. We experienced a long-term drought capped off by the worst bushfires Australia has ever seen. When the rains finally did arrive, they hit our region with such speed it resulted in the sinking of the HRCC Aquatic Weed Harvester from the rapidly rising waters on the Nepean River. However, this was to be all overshadowed by the arrival of the Covid19 pandemic. The operations of the organisation have continued despite all these challenges. It has been an honour to lead such a strong, adaptable and resilient team.

Over the last year, under the operational leadership of the General Manager, Mr Chris Dewhurst, and Coordinators, Ms Natalie James and Mr Phil Price, all of our organisation's vision have been met. With the support of the Board, we have remained focused on providing tangible outcomes concerning weed control and coordination throughout the local government areas of Blacktown, Hawkesbury, Penrith and The Hills Shire.

Over the past year, HRCC has continued to perform its role as a Local Control Authority under the Biosecurity Act 2015. The staff are continually refining their control, surveillance and planning techniques to maximise their efficiency and results. Additionally, to address the long-standing burden of widespread weeds, HRCC this year forged new ground with their first Community-Based Social Marketing campaigns. These education programs focussed on weeds impacting livestock health and the turf industry. Additionally, HRCC has developed new partnerships with major commercial enterprises. Combined with our continued facilitation of the Hawkesbury-Nepean Landcare Network, we now in a position of an industry leader in every facet of weed management.

In summary, the County Council has controlled 74 HA of terrestrial and 27HA of aquatic weeds across our four local government areas. We are thereby alleviating a vast operational burden from our member Councils. By utilising economies of scale and specialisation of human resources, HRCC can provide this service much more efficiently than four Councils could do individually.

Additional to the direct control results, HRCC undertook 3,949 private property inspections (a record for the organisation). The County staff have developed a unique approach to their inspection process, which is defined more by education and extension than regulation. All residents are offered the chance to meet personally with an inspector and have any issues explained to them in plain terms, before any regulatory processes coming into effect.

From a financial perspective, the County Council continues to operate sustainably by living within our means. We seek to broaden our funding base from sources outside of the rates pool, such as Federal and State grants.

In conclusion, this reporting period marks an advancement on the core mission of HRCC to deliver valuable, on-ground and tangible results in weed management despite the challenges which were present. We are committed to ensuring that our services meet the modern needs of the community and the environment, and I am pleased to lead a team that is so wholeheartedly committed to this goal.



Clr. Nathan Zamprogno
Chair, HRCC

REASON FOR THE ANNUAL REPORT

The annual report is one of the key points of accountability between a council and our community. It is not a report to the Division of Local Government or the NSW Government; it is a report to our community.

The report focuses on the council's implementation of the HRCC Delivery Program 2017-2021 and HRCC Operational Plan 2019-2020. The HRCC Audited Financial Statements 2019/2020 are also included in the Annual Report.

The report also includes some information that is prescribed by the Local Government (General) Regulation 2005. This information has been included in the Regulation because we believe that it is important for community members to know about it – to help their understanding of how the council has been performing both as a business entity and a community leader.

Below is the additional legislative basis for the development of our annual report.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1993

Following is a summary of the requirements of Section 404 of the Act:

- The council must prepare an annual report within five months of the end of the financial year.
- The report will outline the council's achievements in implementing its Delivery Program.
- The annual report in the year of the ordinary election will also include an outline of achievements in implementing the Community Strategic Plan.
- The annual report in the year of the ordinary election must include a report (State of the Environment Report) as to the state of the environment in the local government area in relation to the objectives for the environment established by the Community Strategic Plan.
- The report must contain the council's audited financial statements and notes and any information required by the Regulation or the Guidelines.
- A copy of the report must be posted on the council's website (www.hrcc.nsw.gov.au) and provided to the Minister.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL) REGULATION 2005

Clause 217 of the Regulation requires the following information to be included in the annual report:

- Details of overseas visits by councilors and council staff
- Details of mayoral and councilor fees, expenses and facilities
- Contracts awarded by the council
- Amounts incurred in relation to legal proceedings
- Private works and financial assistance
- Details of external bodies, companies, and partnerships
- Details of the General Manager's total remuneration
- Details of the total expenditure on Senior Staff remuneration
- Information on stormwater levies and charges
- Information on companion animal management
- A statement of the activities undertaken by the council to implement its equal employment opportunity management plan.



Vision Statement

An improved environment through an integrated approach to weed management and building capacity

Mission Statement

To provide effective integrated weed management systems to all Constituent Councils fairly and equitably in accordance with the *Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW)*

Values “Our Compass”

- Staff will act with honesty and integrity, and not tolerate a lack of it in others.
- Management will communicate with staff with openness and respect.
- Staff will communicate with openness and respect with each other, and with management.
- We will deliver measurable results for our community and the environment.
- We will build meaningful relationships within the community.
- We will maintain relationships with our member councils that are effective and productive.
- We will treat the safety of ourselves, others and the environment as the highest priority at all times.

BENEFITS OF A COUNTY COUNCIL FOR THE CONTROL OF WEEDS

Formed over a large area boundary problems are avoided. This is critical to effective weeds management.



Concentration of a few rather than many functions leads to specialisation, more efficient and effective outcomes due to increasing focus.



An outbreak of new invasive weeds anywhere in the County Council's area means that ALL the resources are brought to bear on the problem. This is exemplified by periodic outbreaks of Water Hyacinth on the Hawkesbury/Nepean River and in 2004, a major outbreak of Salvinia in the same area.



Management and operational plans are prepared for the county area. As such, the revenue is used to focus attention on required strategic outcomes.



Resource sharing is achieved as resources are used over a larger area of operations. The critical mass needed to properly do the job is more easily achieved.

THE COUNTY COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES

As an organisation the County Council is constituted under the Local Government Act and is specified as a Local Control Authority under the Biosecurity Act. It is a special (single) purpose authority formed to administer, control and eradicate declared priority weeds. The County Council's role is summarised below:

Responsible for administering the *Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW)*.

Control of priority weeds on land occupied by Constituent Councils.

To ensure, as far as practicable, occupiers of land carry out obligations to control priority weeds imposed under the Act.

To report, at the request of the Minister, on the carrying out of the Local Control Authority's functions under the Act.

Inspection of land within the local area in connection with its priority weed control functions.

To develop, implement, co-ordinate and review priority weed control policies and priority weed control

Supply priority weed control services to occupiers of land including public authorities and other persons and charge for the service.

Such other functions as may be conferred or imposed on the Local Control Authority by or under the Acts.

To co-operate with Local Control Authorities of adjoining areas to control priority weeds, where appropriate.

Private property occupiers are responsible for notifying Council of the presence of certain notifiable priority weeds. Council can inspect private properties for priority weed infestations and the giving of directions to landowners and occupiers.

GUIDING STRATEGIES

Weed control is dynamic.

It is closely linked to climate, land use and ecology and must, therefore, be managed in order to respond as these attributes change.

There are, however, a range of guiding strategies that have been shown to be most effective across a range of conditions.

The HRCC 10 Year Business Activity Statement is closely aligned with these strategies as they have been outlined in the NSW Invasive Species Plan 2017-2027.

They are broad enough to allow an organisation to respond to climate and land use but still, conform to a solid set of management principals.

These strategic objectives also follow the guidance provided by the development of our member Council "Community Strategic Plans."

1. Prevent the establishment of new weed species within our County.

2. Eliminate the spread of new and existing weed species within our County.

3. Reduce the impact of widespread weeds on key assets.

4. Support the community, industry and government stakeholders to have the ability and long-term commitment to manage weeds

ANNUAL OPERATIONAL RESULTS 2019-2020

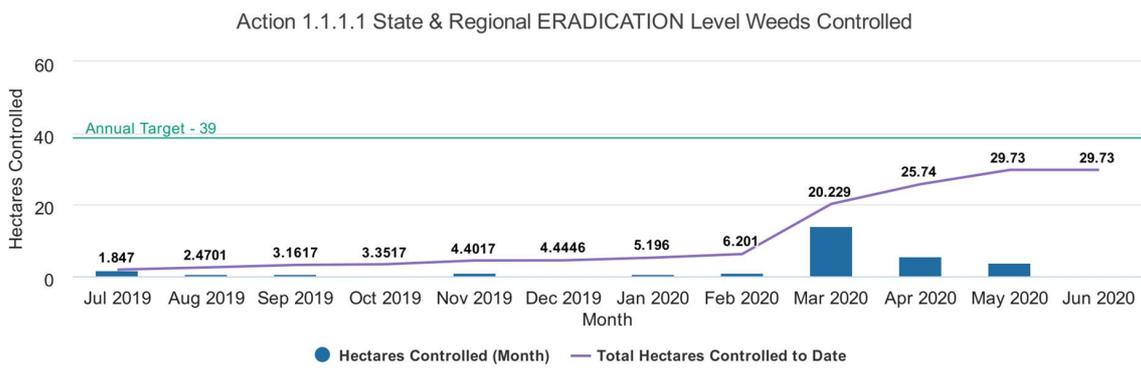
The NSW Biosecurity Act, 2015 which came into effect as of 1 July 2017, replacing The NSW Noxious Weeds Act, 1993 this change in legislation has required a significant change in tack for weed control operations within the county, and the way weed management is conducted across New South Wales.

Terrestrial Weed Control

During the operational period extreme drought, bushfires and floods were experienced throughout the county. The drought influenced our operations as plants can only be treated with herbicide when they are actively growing and not in a stressed state. Techniques such as basal barking (which is further explained in the State Asset section) is not as effective to treat weeds during these conditions. By February significant rainfall was recorded across our county allowing for conditions to improve in the soil and the plants. Despite the above average rainfall causing some flooding in the area it was much needed for terrestrial weeds as this triggered weed growth and seed germination. Species such as Boneseed can remain in the seed bank until the optimal conditions occur to trigger growth.

State & Regional Eradication Level Weed Species

Result: 29.73 Hectares treated



Boneseed (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera subsp. monilifera*) surveillance and control is undertaken throughout the county area. We have target sites that are monitored for seedlings as the parent plants have been treated in the past and our work is to exhaust the seed bank. A number of locations are targeted including Bilpin, Windsor Downs, Glenwood, Norwest, Bella Vista, Erskine Park, Maroota, Glenorie and Doonside. During one visit 780 seedlings were found and hand removed by staff, a record amount for that location.

Boneseed was observed growing beside the M7 onramp from Old Windsor Road at Bella Vista. This was reported to the Biosecurity Weed Inspection Coordinator so that he could contact the land manager. The M7 employ a contractor for maintenance and the information was passed onto them for control. They then communicated back when the works were completed. This was a good outcome to contain the species from spreading further from the Norwest and Bella Vista areas.



Photo 1: HRCC staff have been trained to identify and remove Boneseed seedlings (pictured above) during various growth stages in an effort to exhaust the seed bank and to prevent plants reaching maturity.

Funding was received from Local Land Services to treat plants on private properties. As part of this, recent works have been undertaken to treat Kei Apple (*Dovyalis caffra*) The first area that has been treated was Oakville with the main infestation surrounding the Killarney Chain of Ponds Creek. 190 plants were treated at Oakville, 21 plants at Yarramundi and 9 plants in Shanes Park. The data points of the treated plant locations have been provided to the Department of Primary Industry and Local Land Services. The map in figure 1 was created for the Oakville area shows the extent of this incursion.

Works have continued to treat Kei Apple infestations throughout the county. Yarramundi properties were treated including some plants along the roadside. All of the plants in Yarramundi, Oakville and Shane's Park have now been treated, all using the technique of basal barking the trunks of the trees using a mix of the herbicide Garlon® and diesel as seen in photo 2 below.



Photo 2: Basal barking a Kei apple plant in Oakville

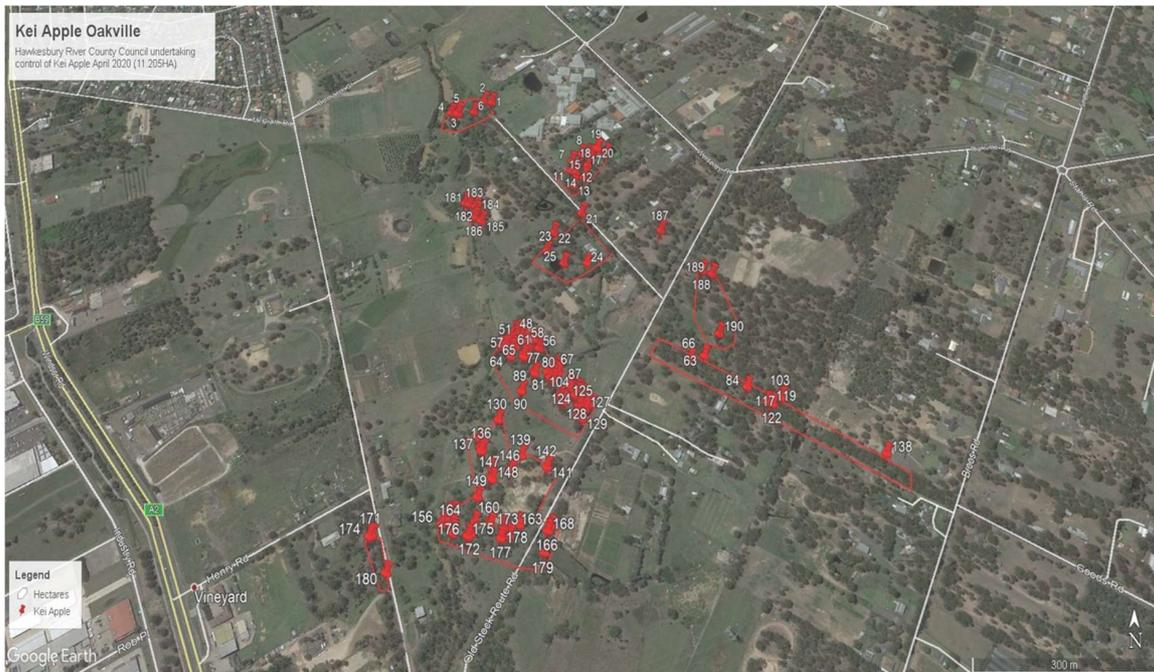
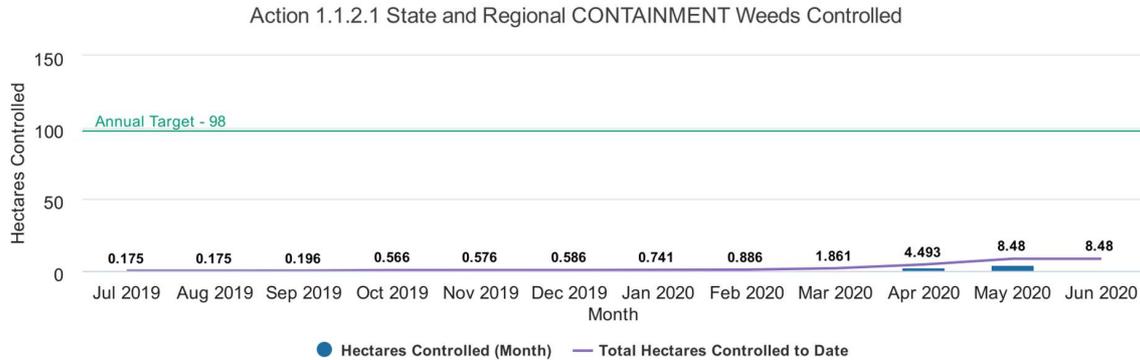


Figure 1: Oakville Kei apple plant locations

State & Regional Containment Level Weed Species

Result: 8.48 Hectares treated

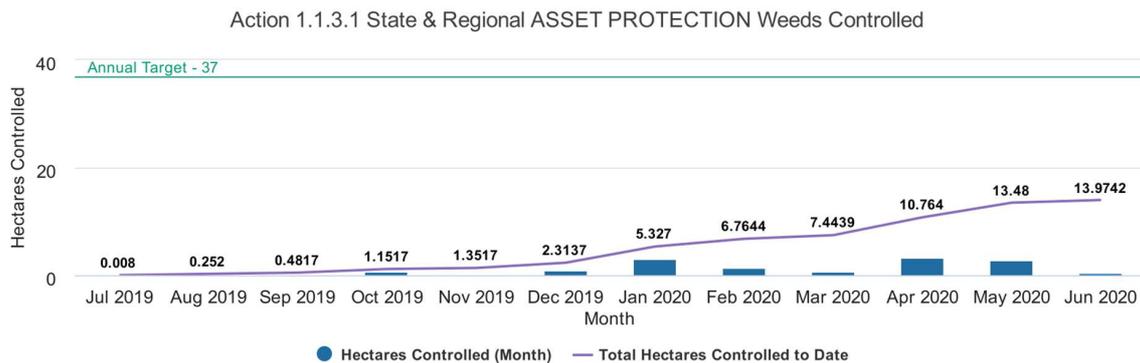


Weeds treated included known locations of Bitou bush (*Chrysanthemoides monilifera subsp. rotundata*) which are checked regularly in Rouse Hill, Erskine Park and Forest Glen.

African olives (*Olea europaea subsp.cuspidata*) were also targeted in roadside locations in Orchard Hills, Wallacia, North Richmond, Grose Vale, Regentville and Windsor Road at Rouse Hill. African olives are treated with the basal barking method of applying a Garlon® 600 and diesel mix to the bark of a tree which is then absorbed into their system.

State & Regional Asset Protection Level Weed Species

Result: 13.97 Hectares treated



Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*) was high volume sprayed with the spray unit along roadside locations in Bilpin and Mulgoa. Blacktown council requested Blackberry to be sprayed in Glenwood and spraying was also undertaken in Oppy Reserve in Quakers Hill. Penrith Council requests were also undertaken to spray Blackberry in Cranebrook Reserve and along the roadside. Due to the rainfall in February the Blackberry season was extended with many plants still fruiting into Autumn in some areas.



Photo 3: Due to the drought and late summer rainfall plants such as Blackberry were observed to be fruiting at Bilpin in May which is very unseasonal.

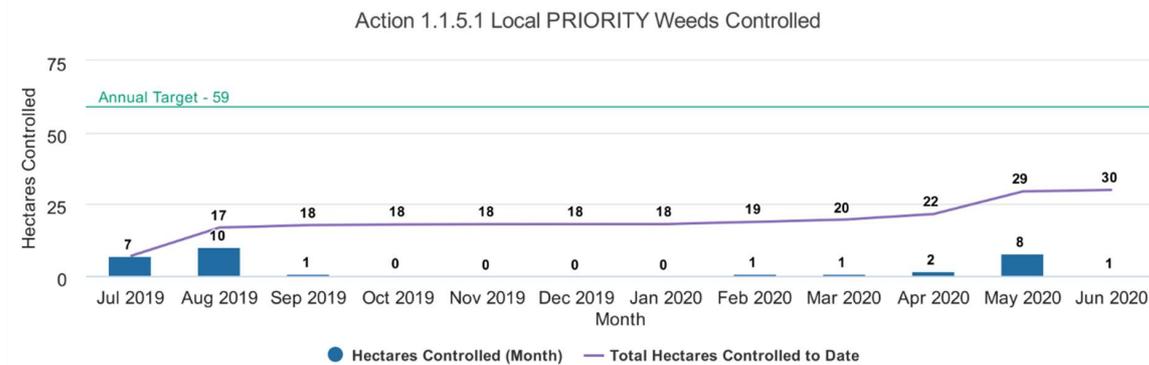
Green cestrum (*Cestrum parqui*) was treated across the county in roadside locations and council parks and reserves. Works continued at Twin Gums Reserve in Lalor Park to undertake follow up treatment of Green cestrum previously treated. Works were also undertaken along South Creek in St Marys and will continue in the next operational period. Staff employ the basal barking method with Garlon 600® and diesel to treat the small plants which are cut and paint with the basal bark mixture. This method is used as it is more effective at killing the underground root system of this species.



Photo 4: HRCC staff using the cut & paint method with Garlon® and Diesel to treat Green cestrum.

Local Priority Level Weed Species

Result: 29.98 Hectares treated



Mother of millions (*Bryophyllum species*) was a focus across the four local government areas in the months of July and August. Treated areas include Riverstone, Vineyard, Marsden Park, Castlereagh, Londonderry, Leonay, Llandilo, Cranebrook, Wallacia, Glenorie, Maroota, Annangrove, Oakville, Freemans Reach, Yarramundi, Kurmond, Pitt Town, Colo Heights, Wilberforce, North Richmond, Clarendon, Maraylya, East Kurrajong, Pitt Town and Kingswood. Most plants were found along roadsides and council reserve locations. In the next operational period these areas will receive follow up treatment for new emerging seedlings. HRCC staff have been trained in extensive use of pump pack low volume spraying for a targeted result and to limit off target damage in comparison to using a spray unit to treat this species.



Photo 5: HRCC staff use blue dye to spray Mother of millions so that sprayed areas are visible to other team members and the public.

Yellow bells (*Tecoma stans*) are a local eradication target with infestations treated in Regentville, Mulgoa, Hobartville, Kurrajong and St Mary's during the operational period. The season was very short due to weather conditions, with plants only flowering for a total of two weeks, creating a limited window for treatment because of the drought conditions. HRCC staff did however report new locations and a list of works has been created for the next season (See new incursion section).



Photo 6: Yellow bells flowering in Regentville at School House Creek in the Penrith LGA. Plants were cut and painted with Vigilant™ II herbicide gel.

Aquatic Weed Management

During the operational period, the aquatic weed management was delayed due to drought conditions and the poor growth conditions of plants. HRCC staff conducted sink tests for the Salvinia Weevil but failed to find any amongst the Salvinia which may have been due to the conditions. During February our county was inundated with flooding after above average rainfall was experienced over a number of days. The land was totally saturated causing increased runoff into local creeks which then spilled across the floodplain. Unfortunately, our weed harvester was flood impacted at Penrith and did disrupt our weed control operations. A salvage operation took place and the harvester is currently being repaired from the damage caused. After the flooding the Hawkesbury Nepean River was surveyed to see what weeds were left behind and how the access has changed.



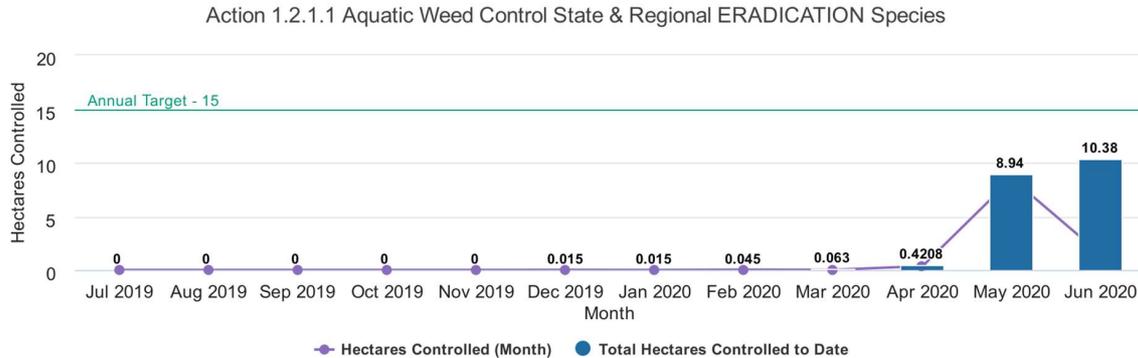
Photos 7 & 8: The sunken HRCC "Weedosaurus" harvester after the flood event



Photo 9: River surveillance for weeds after the flood. This area at North Richmond is shallow and can only be accessed by a small tinny or our Truxor due to the sand bars.

State & Regional Eradication Level Aquatic Weed Species

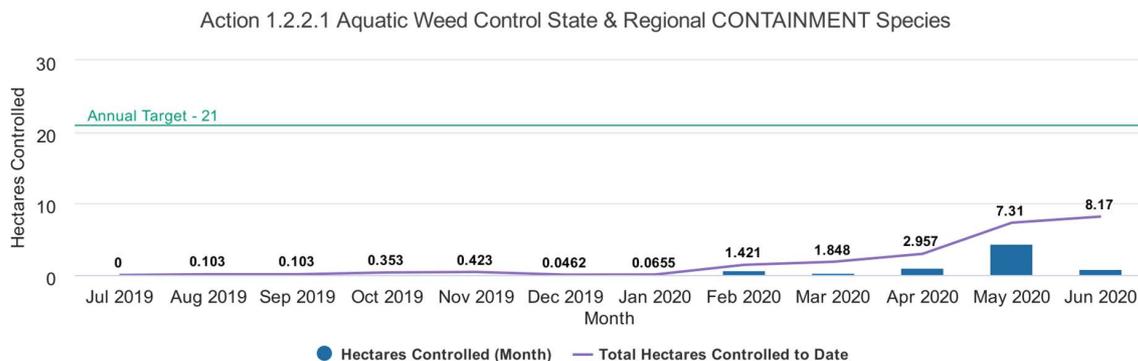
Result: 10.38 Hectares treated



This included treating Black willows (*Salix nigra*) by drilling and injecting with Glyphosate at Yarramundi Reserve. Surveillance was also undertaken of a section of Excelsior and Darling Mills Creek in Baulkham Hills where an infestation of Kidney leaf mud plantain (*Heteranthera reniformis*) had previously been treated. No new plants were located during these works and surveillance will continue in the new operational period.

State & Regional Containment Level Aquatic Weed Species

Result: 8.17 Hectares treated



Works included treating Alligator weed (*Alternanthera philoxeroides*) at Yarramundi Reserve, Bungarrabee Creek, Oppy Reserve and Cattai Bridge Reserve. A tip off from a member of the public led to the discovery of a new incursion of Water hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) in Rickerby's Creek at Howes Park. This was high volume sprayed prior to the plants flowering to reduce the potential for a seed bank to become established.

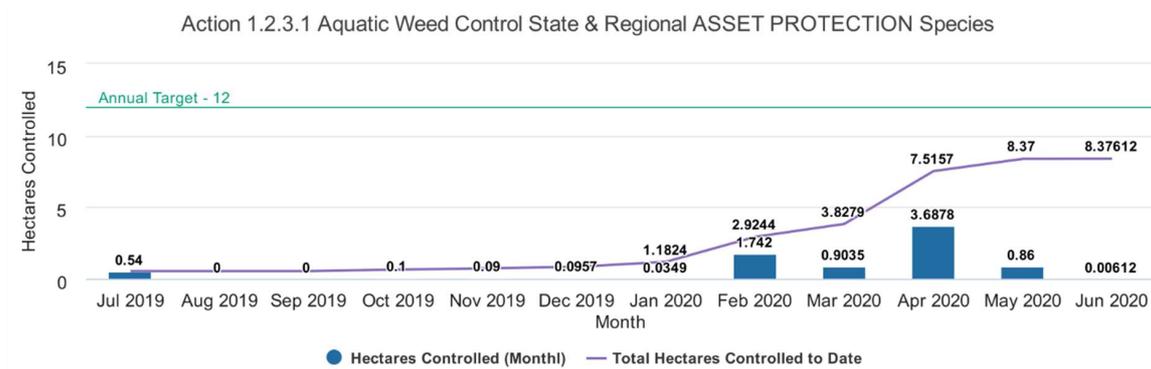
Alligator weed and Senegal tea (*Gymnocoronis spilanthoides*) was sprayed from the HRCC Truxor® amphibious machine on the Hawkesbury River between North Richmond and Windsor as part of an annual control program.



Photo 10: Water Hyacinth in Rickerby's Creek in Windsor which was treated with High Volume spraying prior to flowering.

State & Regional Asset Protection Level Aquatic Weed Species

Result: 8.38 Hectares treated



Most of the works were generated from council requests in particular treating Water primrose (*Ludwigia peruvian*) in drainage channels and creek line areas. Treated areas include Bungarribee Creek, Caddies Creek, Peach Tree Creek, Torry Burn Reserve, Second Ponds Creek, Yarramundi, McGrath's Hill, West Pennant Hills and Kellyville.

At Lake Woodcroft a Salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*) outbreak was treated with the Truxor® which involved using the machine to access areas and to apply herbicide from a spray unit while on the water. A council request was also followed up for the removal of Salvinia at Castle Hill Heritage Park. The Truxor® was used to remove the plant material from the water bodies where it was left on the bank to die off. After the mechanical removal was complete the edges were spot sprayed with herbicide. This area will require follow up treatment in the next operational period.



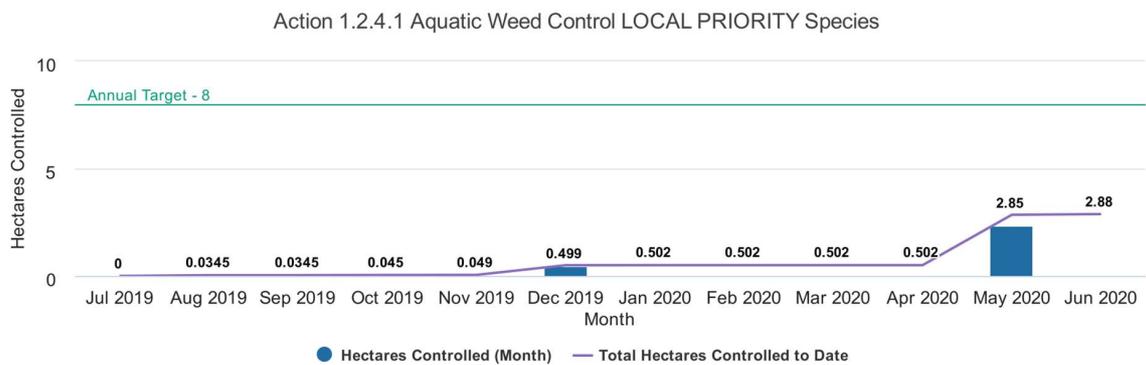
Photo 11: Water primrose was treated after a request for works from Penrith City Council.



Photo 12: Salvinia being scooped out of the water body in Castle Hill Heritage Park for The Hills Shire Council. The infestation was well established, with the bulk of the material removed by the Truxor®.

Local Priority Aquatic Weed Species

Result: 2.88 Hectares treated



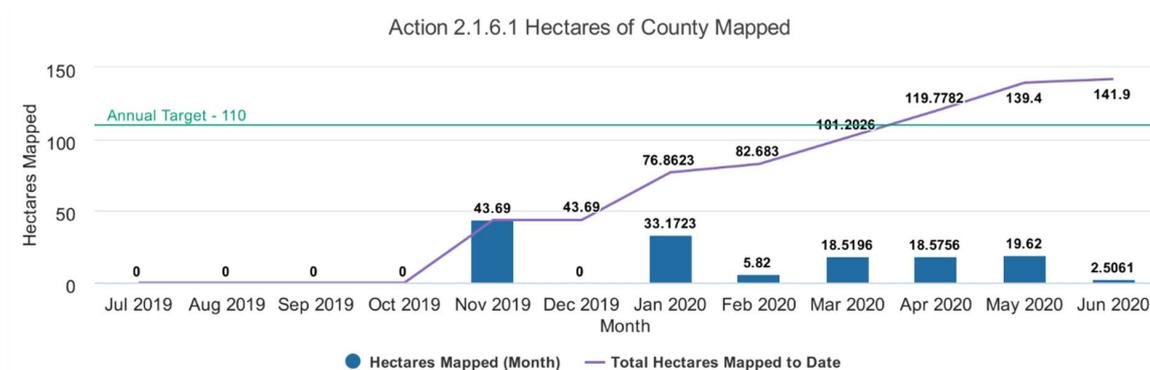
Works included summer harvesting of Ribbon weed (*Vallisneria nana*) for the Nepean Rowers Club at Penrith, before the flood event. Other council requests fulfilled included treating Parrot's feather at Casuarina Reserve in Glenmore Park and spraying and cutting Typha at the Kayak launching ramp at Macquarie Park in Windsor. Due to flooding in summer our aquatic weed harvesting program was disrupted.



Photo 13: The HRCC weed harvester the "Weedasorus" moored at the Nepean Rowers club in Penrith.

Mapping

Result: 141.9 Hectares of mapping completed



The target of 110.2 hectares of the county mapped as a spatial record and achieve our Biosecurity Information System (BIS) compliance was met in the operational period with 141.9 hectares of mapping achieved. This provides us with a visual representation of weeds across the county area and provides a reference for follow up weed control in future planning and works.

New Incursions Identified and Assessed

Result: 9 new incursions

The target of 4 new weed incursions species was achieved during the operational period with 9 recorded in total in our county. New incursions and their location are recorded to allow us to keep track of where HRCC staff have sighted species such as Yellow bells as we know they can be widespread but depending on the season can be more easily identified on new roads or suburbs. It is essential to keep this record so they can be treated when they are actively growing in spring and summer. (see figure 2)

Date	Species	Priority listing	Location	Private or Roadside	Density	Potential spread/impact, treatment or control problems	Council
11.11.19	Yellow bells	Local eradication	545 Castlereagh Road Agnes Banks	Private and Roadside	1-10%	To be inspected	Penrith
11.11.19	Yellow bells	Local eradication	25 Loftus Street Regentville (School House Creek)	Council Reserve	1-10%	Treated Cut and paint	Penrith
11.11.19	Velvety tree pear	Local eradication	Bligh Street near Kensington Park Road Schofields	Roadside	1-10%	Treated 28.11.2019, 09.12.19 Basal bark with Access	Blacktown
12.11.19	Yellow bells	Local eradication	The Kingsway Roadside St Marys	Private	1-10%	Treated 20.01.2020 Another visit required	Penrith
15.11.19	Yellow bells	Local eradication	2 Hermitage Road Kurrajong Hills	Private	1-10%	Landholder engaged. Brought in a bag of seed for disposal on the 20.01.2019 & advised location of a plant on the roadside. Treated 18.02.20 including drill & inject on the private property plant and cut and paint plant on the roadside.	Hawkesbury
21.11.19	Yellow bells	Local eradication	1119 & 1265 Mulgoa Road Mulgoa	Roadside	1-10%	Treated 21.11.2019	Penrith
06.12.2019	Velvety tree pear	Local eradication	291 Third avenue Llandilo	Roadside	1-10%	Undergoing treatment (plants are mature)	Penrith
06.02.2020	Opuntia microdasys	Not listed	29 Clark Road Londonderry	Roadside	1-10%	Pot plant Not treated	Penrith
02.03.2020	Ming asparagus fern	Regional eradication	206 Terrace Road North Richmond	Roadside	1-10%	Treated Hand removed	Hawkesbury
5/05/2020	Kei apple	Regional eradication	Opposite 713 Mamre Rd Kemps Creek	Private and Roadside	1-10%	Treated 19.05.2020	Penrith

Figure 2: New Incursions recorded in the 19/20 Operational Year



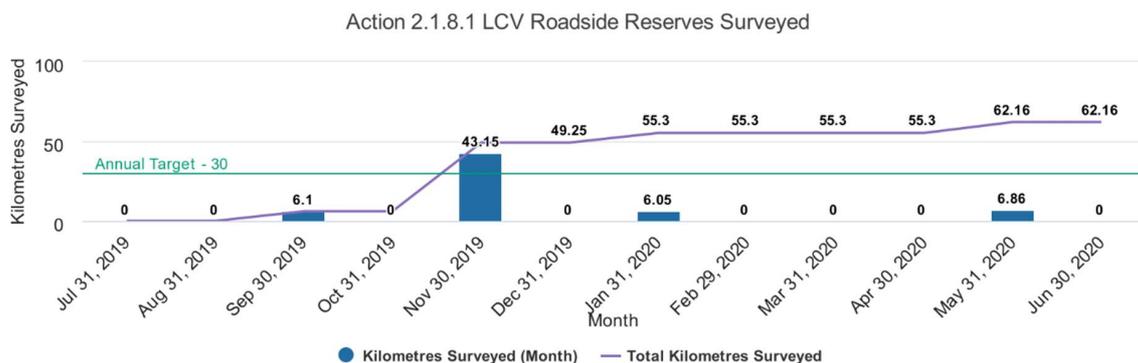
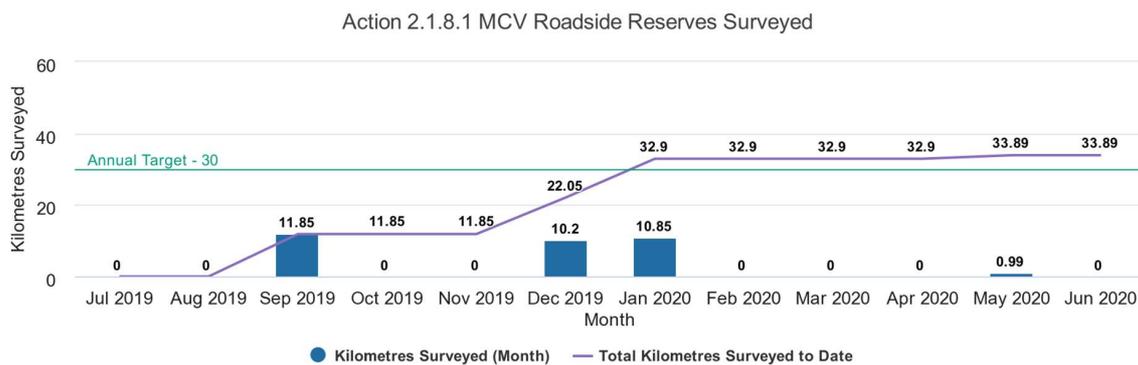
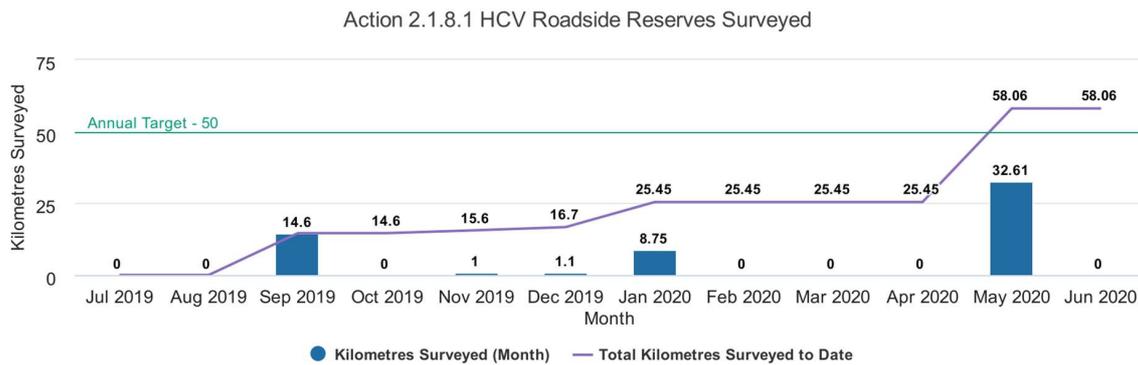
Photo 14: New incursion of Velvety tree pear (Opuntia tomentosa) located in Schofields in the Blacktown LGA. Plants have been treated by basal barking all the foliage with a basal barking mixture of Garlon® 600 and diesel.



Photo 15: Velvety tree pear incursion found in Llandilo in the Penrith LGA. Treatment is ongoing. The land holder is also controlling plants within their property boundary.

Roadside Native Vegetation Management Plan

Result: 58.06km of High Conservation Vegetation surveyed
33.89km of Medium Conservation Vegetation surveyed
62.16km of Low Conservation Vegetation surveyed



This was an excellent result for HRCC with all targets exceeded. Any weeds observed were recorded and will assist in planning future weed control priorities. This was the first year this data was recorded and can be used to plan priorities in the future. This includes identifying roads which have the greatest potential for regeneration by undertaking weed control works in High Conservation Vegetation roadsides.

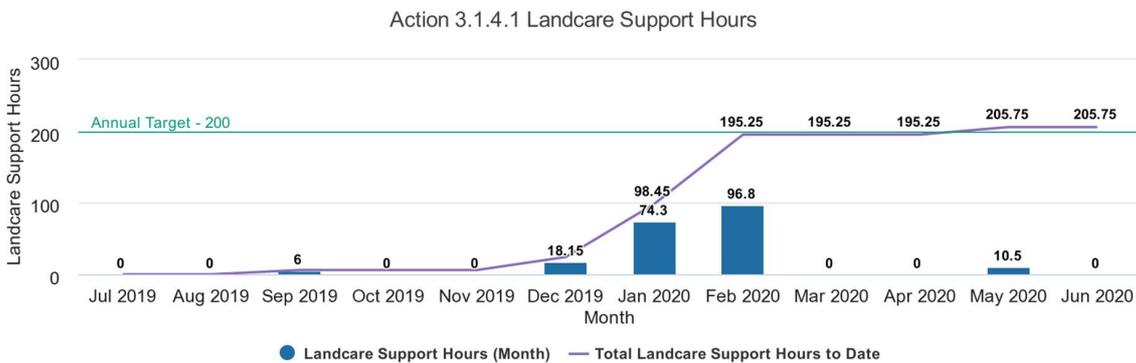
3.9 Hectares of our target of 5 Hectares of weeds managed in High Conservation Vegetation roadside reserves utilising bush regeneration techniques was also completed during the operational period. Although we did not meet this target this was the first year it was undertaken and it was difficult to find suitable areas as we had yet to complete any surveillance. However, now that the surveillance has been completed we have developed a list to guide us as to where teams can work in the 2020-2021 operational period.



Photo 16: Church Lane in Cranebrook is listed as High Conservation Vegetation due to the presence of Juniper-leaved grevillea (*Grevillea juniperina*) which is a threatened species. Hand weeding was undertaken and targeted spot spraying of Mother of millions.

Landcare Support Hours

Result: 205.75 hours support



Our Landcare support target was exceeded and assistance was provided to Landcare and Bushcare groups during the operational period in the form of allocating staff to undertake bush regeneration and weed control. Projects included planting trees with community members at Bushells Lagoon in Freemans Reach and assisting Hawkesbury High School to treat Green cestrum on the school property. A demonstration was also provided at the school of how to treat weeds. HRCC staff also assisted Phil's Forest Bushcare Group by treating vines that were becoming too much for the volunteer group to handle. This included spraying designated areas with selective herbicides to treat Madeira vine and Cats claw creeper.



Photo 17: Biosecurity weed officers planting trees beside Bushell's Lagoon Freemans Reach in support of the Landcare program.



Photo 18: The weed control team treating Green cestrum at Hawkesbury High School

Penrith Roadside Grant

Penrith City Council awarded HRCC a grant of \$25,000 to undertake weed control spraying along roadsides targeting three specified low priority weeds. This included 208 hours of weed control along 29 roads in the Penrith LGA. Suburbs targeted included Berkshire Park, Llandilo, Londonderry, Agnes Banks, Castlereagh, Werrington, Kemps Creek, Orchard Hills, Wallacia, Luddenham, and Mulgoa. The weeds targeted were Fireweed (*Senecio madagascariensis*), Khaki weed (*Alternanthera pungens*) and Sticky nightshade (*Solanum sisymbriifolium*) (which was previously thought to be Apple of sodom (*Solanum linnaeanum*) until a correct identification was made).

Before these works were undertaken it was essential that information was obtained regarding the vegetation status. Across our county a number of roads had previously been surveyed and have been classified as High, Medium, or Low Conservation value, and this dictates our methods for control. For the grant some roads were high volume sprayed with a powered spray unit attached to a vehicle, or low volume sprayed with a hand held pump pack sprayer in areas that are classified as High Conservation value. At the completion of the project a report was produced and given to Penrith City Council outlining the works and results.



Photo 19: Khaki weed with burrs forming at the nodes treated as part of the Penrith Roadside Grant



Photo 20: High volume spraying was undertaken on roadside locations which were not classified as High Conservation Vegetation

Crown Reserves Grant

The Crown Reserves Improvement Fund Grant was awarded to HRCC for the sum of \$48,000 to complete weed control works on crown land. Six sites were chosen across the county, all of which have been worked on in previous years. The grant ran for the duration of the 2019-2020 financial year targeting State Asset weeds and other weeds having a negative impact on these areas. A total of 1053.53 weed control hours were completed with 19.52 Hectares of weeds controlled. Staff employ bush regeneration techniques in these areas to encourage natural regeneration of native species and take into consideration the aesthetic aspect of these areas.

Another requirement of the grant was to conduct weed surveillance across a nominated list of crown reserves throughout the financial year by completing a set number of hours at each site. Bigger reserves were granted more hours to cover the larger areas. A weed list was produced for each site and submitted to the funding authority at the end of the project. It was also important information for our records in identifying new incursions as well as threats outside of the property that need to be reported. 11 weeds maps were produced as part of the grant, mapping all the weeds in the specified crown reserves. A report of the works has been sent to the funding authority and the 2020-2021 grant application has been submitted.

Shaw's Island – Hawkesbury LGA				
Measurable Output (Hectares)	Target Hours	Hectares Treated	Hours Achieved	Remaining Hours
3.7HA	244	12.0136	246.5	-2.5
Weeds treated	<i>Honey locust, Green cestrum, Alligator weed, Black willows, Castor oil, Lantana, Balloon vine</i>			
Cattai Bridge – Hawkesbury LGA				
Measurable Output (Hectares)	Target Hours	Metres ² treated	Hours Achieved	Remaining Hours
6.5HA	244	0.393	243.21	0.79
Weeds treated	<i>Lantana, Morning glory, Alligator weed, Ludwigia peruviana, Wild tobacco, Privet, Annuals, Cats claw, Ochna</i>			
Quakers Hill Reserve – Blacktown LGA				
Measurable Output (Hectares)	Target Hours	Metres ² Treated	Hours Achieved	Remaining Hours
3.6HA	44	0.5358	42	2
Weeds treated	<i>Blackberry, Madeira vine, Alligator weed, Arundo grass (treatment and removal)</i>			
Skeleton Rocks – Hawkesbury LGA				
Measurable Output (Hectares)	Target Hours	Hectares Treated	Hours Achieved	Remaining Hours
7.4HA	80	0.1733	82.5	-2.5
Weeds treated	<i>Arundo grass, Lantana, Annuals</i>			

Holland Reserve – Hills LGA				
Measurable Output (Hectares)	Target Hours	Hectares Treated	Hours Achieved	Remaining Hours
16HA	280	5.782	277.82	2.18
Weeds treated	<i>Lantana, Privet, Green cestrum, Fleabane, Senna, Crofton weed, Wild tobacco, Blackberry nightshade, Sticky nightshade, Khaki weed, Spider plant</i>			
Lucas Avenue – Hills LGA				
Measurable Output (Hectares/Kilometres)	Target Hours	HA/km Treated	Hours Achieved	Remaining Hours
5.42HA/ 1.6KM	160	0.6197/ 1.8	161.51	-1.51
Weeds treated	<i>Madeira vine, Lantana, Privet, Acer, Wild tobacco, Annuals</i>			

Figure 3: Crown Land Reserves Grant Outcomes



Photo 21: Weed control was undertaken at Shaw's Island in Yarramundi as part of the Crown Lands grant. Staff basal barked Honey locust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) with Starane® and diesel which proved to be an effective way to kill large trees.

WEED CONTROL HIGHLIGHTS

<p>29.73 Hectares of State & Regional Priority Weeds Destroyed</p>		<p>13.97 Hectares of State Asset Protection Weeds Destroyed</p>
	<p>29.98 Hectares of Local Priority Weeds Destroyed</p>	
<p>26.93 Hectares of Aquatic Weeds Destroyed</p>		<p>141.9 Hectares of County Mapped for Weed Incursions</p>

780 Boneseed seedlings located & hand removed in one day

Inspection Program

Private Property Inspections

Result: 3949 inspections



Private property inspections have been undertaken in the flowing locations across the county. Shanes Park, Llandilo, Yaramundi, Bungarribee, Oakville, McGraths Hill, and Vineyard (Kei apple (*Dovyalis caffra*) Eradication). Kenthurst and Annangrove (Threatened Ecological Community and Bushcare site protection). Oakville, Maraylya, Cattai, and Pitt Town (private property buffer zone of the natural assets of Scheyville National Park). Colebee and Claremont Meadows (Urban interface inspections and member council requests). Leonay and Emu Plains (African olive (*Olea europaea*) eradication and surveillance).

The team was able to surpass its target inspection numbers. The coordinator of this area is now able to run highly strategic inspection programs across the county because of the data gathered from this year's inspections.

Of particular note, was the highly successful Kei apple (*Dovyalis caffra*) inspection program that targeted seven suburbs to locate and eradicate Kei apple (*Dovyalis caffra*) plants. As reported in the weed control section 220 plants were successfully treated. Continued surveillance of these areas is planned for the next operational year.

HRCC has also conducted many reactionary inspections on private property that are triggered by communication from the public via phone calls or direct reporting of issues to the council. Some of these reports have to lead to the successful identification of new weed incursions within the county, which has been identified and has or is currently being controlled.

Private property reinspection's were significantly affected by staffing turn over and the COVID 19 pandemic however the team was still able to achieve good results.



Photo 22: Kei apple treatment as part of the successful Kei apple inspection program

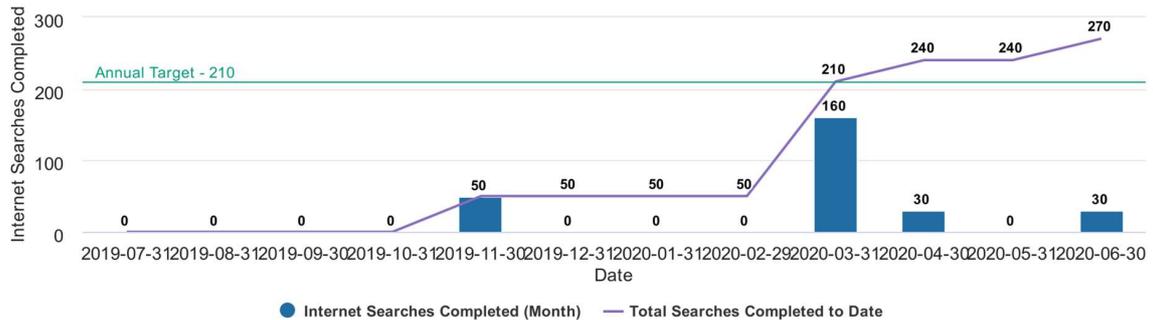
High-Risk Sites (nurseries, pet stores, etc), High-Risk Pathways and Internet Surveillance

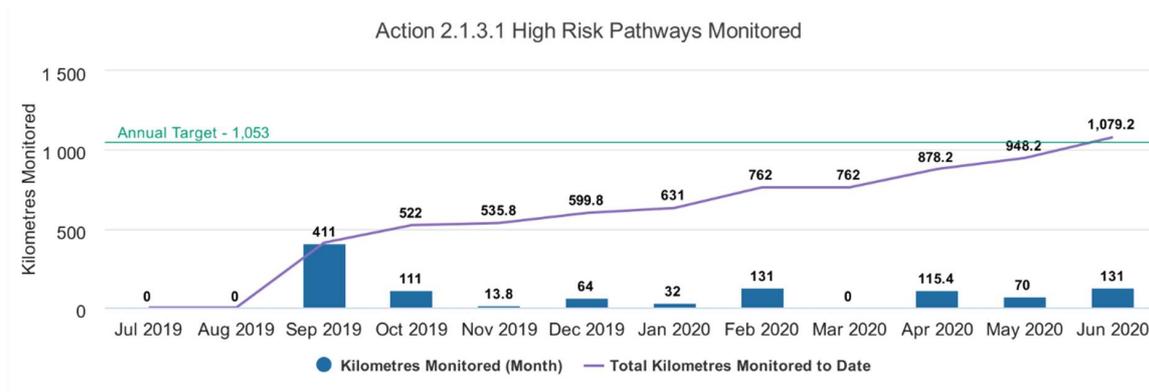
Result: 239 Inspections of high-risk sites
 270 Internet searches
 1079 km of high-risk pathways monitored

Action 2.1.2.1 Inspection of Aquariums, Nurseries etc



Action 2.1.2.1 Specific Internet Searches





Inspections of high-risk sites were also impacted by staffing turnover, however, a satisfactory amount of inspections were achieved after this impact had resolved. Most importantly the development of a new fruitful and beneficial relationship between HRCC and the industry groups that are involved in these sites has now been developed, this has ultimately resulted in several reports of new incursions and a positive media article in the quarterly Nursery & Garden Industry NSW & ACT magazine.

A successful working relationship was also established with the Westlink M7 to undertake continuous weed surveillance and control within their land. This was triggered by the discovery of Boneseed (*Chrysanthemoides moniliferao*) on the M7 by HRCC weed control staff, that the Biosecurity Inspectors subsequently confirmed and referred to the M7 coordinator as the location posed significant safety risks to staff. This relationship has also seen a number of priority weed species identified and controlled by private contractors on the M7 high-risk pathway.

The target of surveillance of our high-risk pathways was successfully met and overachieved. A new inspection method of scheduling specific surveillance works on our high-risk pathways proved to be far more productive and successful at detecting priority weeds and mapping them for control.

The incursion of Parthenium weed (*Parthenium hysterophorus*), listed as a Schedule 2 State Prevention Priority Weed within the Biosecurity Act 2015, found within NSW and the Greater Sydney area triggered an immediate response from our Biosecurity team to begin inspections on identified high-risk fodder sites and poultry breeding sites (the incursion with the Greater Sydney area resulted from contaminated organic poultry feed from Queensland). Over 35 inspections took place on registered high-risk sites alongside a media campaign that generated eight community tipoffs for suspected incursions. Thankfully, all inspections and tipoffs were negative for the presence of Parthenium weed (*Parthenium hysterophorus*).

The Biosecurity Weed Inspection Coordinator was able to attend, at the invitation of the Local Control Authority, an active incursion on the Central Coast. This allowed the Coordinator to see Parthenium weed (*Parthenium hysterophorus*) firsthand, take educational field notes and pictures for identification to be used within the HRCC area of control.

It also allowed HRCC the opportunity to develop positive relationships with the poultry industry within the county, something that had not previously been established.

Online surveillance targets were also surpassed and resulted in notable priority weed sale detections and seizures of Water hyacinth (*Pontederia crassipes*), Frogbit (*Limnobium laevigatum*), and *Opuntia* species.

Landholders Provided with Advice

Result: 429 Landholders



The majority of this year’s advice and assistance to landholders was given verbally and via email correspondence with factsheets and other hardcopy resources which resulted in providing advice to landholders being surpassed.

Non-Regulatory Inspections & Weed Management Plans

Because of a lack of demand and reporting from landholders both targets for weed management plans and non-regulatory inspections (defined as reactionary, for example, landholder requests and tipoffs) were not met. However, a respectable amount of 160 non-regulatory inspections were still undertaken throughout the county area, resulting in several new incursions being found as well as positive relationship building with landholders.

The lack of weed management plans should not be seen as a negative result as it demonstrates that the initial consultation and information being provided to landholders is by the biosecurity inspectors is adequate for them to undertake weed control without the need for entering a weed management plan. It also demonstrates that large weed infestations do not exist within the inspected areas as large weed infestations generally require long term control plans and thus the development of weed management plans.

Roadside Vegetation Management- Landholder advice.

Our Weed Extension Officer produced an information pack and sent it out to 10 properties identified as being located adjacent to high conservation roadside reserves.

The information packs outlined the works that had been undertaken on the reserves and the high conservation roadside reserves as well as how the landholders can help preserve and improve these reserves. This educational tool was well received by the landholders.

INSPECTION HIGHLIGHTS

<p>239 Nurseries and Sales Outlets Inspected</p>		<p>160 Non-Regulatory Inspections</p>
	<p>1079 KM Of High Risk Pathways Monitored</p>	
<p>270 Targeted Internet Searches</p>		<p>109 Private Property Reinspections</p>
	<p>429 Landholders Provided with Advice</p>	

Completed a Record 3949 Private Property Inspections

Community Awareness and Public Education

Community-Based Social Marketing (CBSM www.cbsm.com) methodology is used in the education space and is becoming part of the expectation of the theory contributing to many weeds' extension education programs. HRCC uncovered 'knowledge gaps' farmers had on aquatic & toxic weeds.

Member councils asked HRCC to expand survey work to capture some of their community areas, to complement their work about community knowledge on weeds. Results from the short survey work showed the community in these areas had limited knowledge about weeds and were more inclined to leave them be as they enjoyed the attractive flowers. HRCC's Weeds Extension Officer worked closely with member council staff to encourage the community to volunteer at their local Bushcare site and have provided further education packs to the interested residents about native alternatives to the weeds to grow in their gardens in the Hills, Penrith & Blacktown Local Government Areas. Better outcomes & efficiencies are achieved when HRCC staff work closely with our member council staff and industry partners.

Farmers completed target training on aquatic weeds identification, these weeds can cause real problems for our environment and agriculture if not contained. Best Management, weed hygiene practices, and the following aquatic weeds were targeted for the 'farmgate' training:

- Frogbit (*Limnobium laevigatum*)
- Water lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*)
- Salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*)
- Alligator weed (*Pistia stratiotes*)
- Senegal tea (*Gymnocoronis spilanthoides*)

Aquatic weeds are often found in waterways with moderate to high nutrient loads, farm dams, water storage sites and floodplain streams and drains. They can be found in areas where people have access to waterways, near boat ramps, bridge crossings, waterways on main roads, and water storage facilities. The turf production and distribution industry can unknowingly distribute aquatic weeds through irrigation channels and equipment, making them a key stakeholder to educate about weed control. A turf farmer through the training had found weeds- Salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*), Alligator weed (*Pistia stratiotes*) & Senegal tea (*Gymnocoronis spilanthoides*) in a small dam, meters from the Hawkesbury Nepean River. Advice from HRCC was given on permits needed to spray in water bodies and what type of herbicide to use for control, this was effectively done before the increased rain in February caused flooding in this area and the small dam would have joined up with the Hawkesbury-Nepean River resulting in weed dispersal migrating downstream.

HRCC educational resources were distributed to relevant member council staff in our county. Visual resources like priority weeds with photos and government links are handy for our community and have been developed. These resources were needed to assist with community weed advice & HRCC inspections and have been designed in consultation with community, HRCC staff & member council staff.

Community engagement through HRCC representatives has seen an increase from the community on reporting of weed issues. Residents are beginning to see weeds as a shared community responsibility. Before the project commencing residents reporting on weeds and asking for advice was much lower. The HRCC Weed Extension Officer helped a farmer through this project, identify and provide control advice on a weed called Foxtail (*Ceratophyllum demersum*) that was blocking his irrigation lines on the Hawkesbury Nepean River.

Some of the general questions to farmers under the CBSM grant program guidelines and community-based framework were used as a basis for discussion with the farmers as follows:

- What are the farmer's primary topics of concern with weeds?
- What human behaviours (or lack of) are being targeted to assist with weed control?
- What other information and resources do the farmers require on weed control?

Evaluation of Survey Work

A key stakeholder feedback survey was developed by HRCC to see what our contacts, turf farmers and livestock farmers thought about the resources and project work to date. The survey was anonymously completed through Survey Monkey to get honest insights into the work undertaken.

'HRCC has been very helpful talking to farmers and turf producers educating them about aquatic weeds. Michelle (HRCC Weeds Extension Officer) has spoken to a variety of farmers and provided valuable information that is disseminated through Turf NSW networks and communication channels'

Interestingly, the turf farmers found the face-to-face farm visits invaluable where-as the Member council officers preferred the individual weed postcards for their community. The priority weeds list with photos is better for our livestock rural landholders.

Member councils found the individual weed identification postcards for the peri-urban areas useful as they provide a simple snapshot for the urban residents and infographics are used making it easier for those not versed in weed control to understand. As our weed control team conducted works in high-value roadside bushland in the Hills and Penrith Local Government Areas education packs were sent out to residents as restrictions were placed around face to face visits due to Covid 19. The education pack contained advice around why we value roadside high conservation bushland and reported on the weeds the HRCC team removed.

COMMUNITY AWARENESS & PUBLIC EDUCATION HIGHLIGHTS

10 farmgate aquatic weed training days



42 farmers engaged

COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	IMAGE	OBJECTIVE	LITING	WRA
Alfalfa Weed*	<i>Medicago sativa</i>		CONVULSION	STATE	YES
Redhead water hyacinth*	<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>		PREVENTION	STATE	YES
Amorpha*	<i>Thermopsis villosa var. villosa</i>		CONVULSION	LOCAL	YES
Black willow*	<i>Salix nigra</i>		ERADICATION	REGIONAL	YES
Columba*	<i>Columba caudata</i>		ASSET	STATE	YES
East Indian Poppy*	<i>Rhynchospora polypetala</i>		PREVENTION	REGIONAL	YES

**8 education packs/
63 weed information sheets, 9 weed control cards distributed to landholders and member councils**

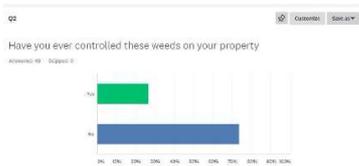
- Weeds on our roadside are easily spread by birds, wind & feral animals impacting on bushland
- Weeds can impact on hobbies like bushwalking and horse riding
- Reduce the look of our bushland
- Impact our farming land, livestock and crops
- Compete with native plants for nutrients, water and sunlight
- Alter plant communities habitat
- Form thick areas of weedy plants that shade and smother native plants & reduce food for our native animals



2 community weed education days/40 residents engaged



53 community research surveys



1 CBSM case study completed

About

Why Community based social marketing?
 Changing outdated weed management education approaches to a more effective environmental education program was the focus of 2018 by NSW Department of Primary Industries. In reality, it took decades of years, campaigns, and partnerships to work on anchored ground for both the community & the state. Unlike the old-fashioned of attending generic courses with limited exposure, the new Partnership with up front weed action work, uncovered some of the real-world problems, from weed management, and how we can give them tools to address their issues.

What drives the engagement approach?
 The project was driven by NSW Department of Primary Industries. The project was supported by the NSW Department of Primary Industries, Greening NSW, and the NSW Department of Primary Industries. Through the project, the NSW Department of Primary Industries and a handful of NSW Local Government and Time to Plant NSW to get off the ground, there was nothing to benchmark the work on.

Hawkesbury Landcare Network



Over the 2019 - 2020 year, Hawkesbury Landcare Network (HLN) continued to build land-caring capacity in the local community by engaging many people, groups, and organizations across the Hawkesbury. A major contributor to this is through the development of groups and networks and, the connection of people, practices, and places.

An additional Local Landcare Coordinator (LLC) began their role in November, funded through the continued support of HRCC, providing much-needed support for private landholders and community groups across Penrith, Blacktown, Hawkesbury, and the Hills Local Government Areas. The combined efforts of the two LLC roles highlighted the need for improved relationships between conservation groups and initiatives in the region and led to all four regions being considered part of a broader Hawkesbury-Nepean Landcare Network (HNLN), supported by the two LLC roles.

The Local Landcare Coordinator position evolved into one full time coordinator midway through the year and this created the benefit of fluidity across the networks with the one contact and less confusion for the volunteers and community.

Landholder support and HNLN membership

Continued support has been available to key Landcare Groups, including Cumberland Reach Landcare, Blue Gum Landcare and Fred Caterson Reserve Landcare. The latter two groups have been facilitated and run by the Cattai Hills Environment Network (CHEN). The LLC developed a website for CHEN, trained members to use the website, and create blogs to encourage promotion and record of the work of CHEN.

Support is also being provided to Hawkesbury Environment Network's Pughs Lagoon project.

Private property visits to inform residents on bush regeneration, land management, wetlands, and riparian management have continued through inquiries and outreach. These visits help inform future projects for funding and empower landholders to connect with and protect biodiversity on their property.

Membership remained at almost 100 people for HNLN, including state and local government partners, community groups, and private landholders.

Platypus in The Hills Shire

CHEN conducted a research project to survey for platypus in the Cattai and Little-Cattai Catchment in partnership with Western Sydney University. The status of platypus in NSW is largely unknown, in The Hills Shire Council there have been historical sightings and many reported potential sightings of platypus. As a largely misunderstood species under threat, CHEN's research was essential to understanding the protecting the species in the Hills. The researchers did find DNA evidence of platypus in THSC at several sites near urban and planned development areas. This is a very significant finding which will inform future developments and highlights the need for a Platypus Conservation Strategy in the Hills.



Photos 23 & 24: CHEN platypus project

Wetland Network

Hawkesbury Landcare's Local Landcare Coordinator (LLC) has continued to contribute to the local Wetland Working Group (WWG), which was initially formed by Hawkesbury City Council in 2018. As a stakeholder and member of the WWG HLN successfully received a grant to contact a Hawkesbury Wetlands Assessment across 30 wetlands, engaging local landholders and community groups. Covid-19 restrictions limited the engagement that could be carried out however progress was made gathering previous research from the previous *Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Management Authority*, by contacting residents of privately owned wetlands and doing Rapid Wetland Assessments to provide a baseline. Where restrictions permitted, WWG members joined the LLC on wetland visits to form relationships with residents.

On-ground support has continued at Bushells Lagoon and is a bi-monthly occurrence under a WetlandCare initiative. An event with Greater Sydney Landcare Network for "Get Your Hands Dirty" has been planned for next year to include turtle monitoring. Other wetlands currently being supported include Bradleys Lagoon in Sackville, Blundells Swamp in North Sackville, Pughs Lagoon, Yarramundi Lagoon, and an unnamed private Lagoon in Ebenezer. These wetlands are being included on a Wetland Network and will be the basis for grant applications and on-ground volunteer opportunities, as they arise.



Photo 25: Wetlands Working Group with the LLC

StreamWatch

StreamWatch has continued through the year via support from the LLC, with two sites at Bushell's Lagoon in Wilberforce. The Earl Road site was dry until February, but Brewers Lane has consistently been tested for quality and water levels. After the floods in February, there were low dissolved oxygen levels, poor water quality, and a large carp die-off event.

The two Maraylya sites located at Cataract Creek and Cattai Creek Ford have been monitored by the Cattai Hills Environment Network Inc (CHEN) all year, with no flow for most of the year. Water quality has been good since the creek began flowing again.

CHEN also began a new StreamWatch group at their Landcare site in Fred Caterson Reserve. The LLC joined the CHEN Project Officers and StreamWatch Officer for a quality assessment training day at the site and to take the first readings.



Photo 26: StreamWatch group at the Fred Caterson Reserve

Little Wheeny Creek/ Koala Habitat Restoration Program

HLN has continued to support a group of 13 individual neighbouring properties who joined last year to carry out restoration works in the Kurrajong area to improve their koala habitat. Several hundred koala habitat and food trees have been planted, lantana removed and koalas have been spotted across the properties. A property walk and an update meeting were organized by HLN and provided an opportunity for neighbours to see each other's work. The LLC visited properties individually to provide support during restrictions and set up a social media group to help neighbours stay connected. The program is supported by HLN, with overall funding and project administration set up by Greater Sydney Local Land Services.

Through media and word of mouth, the number of inquiries from properties in Kurrajong who are interested in Landcare support and advice has been increasing and the LLC has been supporting those properties to support biodiversity and connectivity in Kurrajong.



Photo 27: Progress photo of Kurrajong property Koala habitat restoration program

Bushfire Fire Recovery

In response to the 2019-2020 Bushfires, HNLN and HRCC developed a resource “Responding to Fire on Your Property” to provide immediate information to residents on how to manage weeds, soil erosion, and recovery on their properties.

This has been followed up by a program providing support to bushfire affected properties and providing advice on post-fire land management (e.g. weeds, soil) and conservation. HNLN is and will continue to visit properties and plans to run workshops on topics of interest to the community and building networks for long-term wildlife recovery and bushland management.

HNLN is considered a Bushfire and Recovery Support Services and attends meetings held by HCC for these services. The need for this assistance was recognized and has been acknowledged other services.

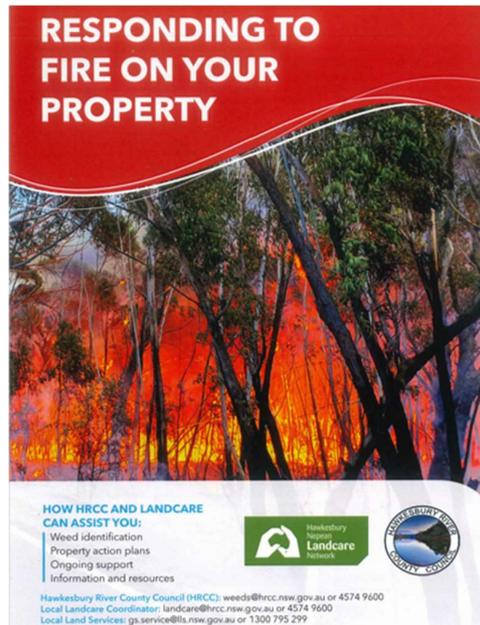


Photo 28: “Responding to fire on your property” resource developed in response to recent bushfires in the Greater Sydney area.

Supporting Bushcare and Landcare in Penrith

The HNLN LLC began supporting groups and Bushcare sites in Penrith, including Crossman’s Reserve, Cumberland Land Conservancy, and Mulgoa Valley Landcare Network. The LLC has also visited properties to provide advice on land management and bush regeneration. A Landcare survey was distributed through Penrith to determine what residents and community members are interested in and to inform Landcare activities. Conservation activities for the endangered species Nodding Geebung (*Personia Nutans*) began in partnership with GSLN, Penrith City Council, and Save Our Species but were paused due to Covid-19 and will begin when restrictions lift.

Landcare is new in Blacktown

A meeting with Blacktown Council staff was held to introduce the LLC and the concept of Landcare to BCC staff and discuss ways that HLNN can plan their work support and complement BCC's Bushcare groups and conservation work. This year the LLC focused on creating awareness about Landcare in Blacktown, answered resident inquires or concerns, and attended Sustainable Schools Network meetings to offer support to schools as they require it. The LLC intended to visit the Sustainability Hub and attend events but due to events being postponed, this will be done next possible. HNLN will be featured in future Sustainable Living Newsletters to continue building awareness of who they are and what services they offer.

Schools

This year HNLN provided advice and on-ground support to 4 schools starting environment and nature projects, including advising what species to plant for a wildlife garden, running a planting day, advice on online resources to still incorporate nature in education during Covid-19 restrictions, and career advice for senior students.



Photo 29: Habitat Garden at Montessori School in the Hills Shire.

WEEDS DECLARED UNDER THE BIOSECURITY ACT (2015)

The *Noxious Weeds Act 1993* was repealed on 1 July 2017 and replaced with the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.

State Priority Weed Objective – PREVENTION

These weeds are currently not found in the state, pose significant biosecurity risk and Prevention of the biosecurity risk is a reasonably practical objective.

State Priority Weed Objective – ERADICATION

These weeds are present in limited distribution and abundance in some parts of the state. Elimination of the biosecurity risk posed by these weeds is a reasonably practical objective.

State Priority Weed Objective – CONTAINMENT

These weeds are widely distributed in some parts of the state. While broad scale elimination is not practicable, minimisation of the biosecurity risk posed these weeds is reasonably practicable.

State Priority Weed Objective – ASSET PROTECTION (Whole of State)

These weeds are widely distributed in some areas of the State. As Weeds of National Significance, their spread must be minimised to protect priority assets.

A1.2 Regional Priority Weeds

Regional Priority Weed Objective – PREVENTION

These weeds are currently not found in the Greater Sydney region, pose significant biosecurity risk and prevention of the biosecurity risk posed by these weeds is a reasonably practical objective

Regional Priority Weed Objective – ERADICATION

These weeds are present in limited distribution and abundance. Elimination of the biosecurity risk posed by these weeds is a reasonably practical objective.

Regional Priority Weeds objective – CONTAINMENT

These weeds are widely distributed in the region. While broad scale elimination is not practicable, minimisation of the biosecurity risk posed by these weeds is reasonably practicable.

Regional Priority Weed Objective – ASSET PROTECTION

These weed species are common and widespread in the landscape. Strategic management of these species may apply in specific circumstances and may be enforced by a local control authority under a landholder's general biosecurity duty.

Regional Strategic Response

Identify priority assets for targeted management.

Refer to Greater Sydney Local Land Services, Greater Sydney, Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2017-2022 Appendix 1.2 which can be found on the Greater Sydney Local Land Services website
<https://greatersydney.lls.nsw.gov.au/biosecurity/weed-control>

Refer Appendix 1.2 Prevention.

† Refer Appendix 1.2 Eradication.

†† Refer Appendix 1.2 Containment.

‡ Refer Appendix 1.2 Asset Protection.

HAWKESBURY RIVER COUNTY COUNCIL

PRIORITY WEED LIST SEPTEMBER 2020

COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	OBJECTIVE	LISTING
African boxthorn	<i>Lycium ferocissimum</i>	ASSET	STATE
African milk bush	<i>Synadenium grantii</i>	ERADICATION	LOCAL
African olive	<i>Olea europaea subsp. cuspidata</i>	CONTAINMENT	REGIONAL
Alligator weed	<i>Alternanthera philoxeroides</i>	CONTAINMENT	STATE
Anchored water hyacinth	<i>Eichhornia azurea</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Arrowhead	<i>Sagittaria calycina var. calycina</i>	CONTAINMENT	LOCAL
Asparagus fern	<i>Asparagus virgatus</i>	CONTAINMENT	LOCAL
Asparagus weed	<i>Asparagus aethiopicus</i> , † <i>A. africanus</i> , <i>A. asparagoides</i> including the Western Cape form*, <i>A. plumosus</i> , and <i>A. scandens</i>	ASSET	STATE
Bellyache bush	<i>Jatropha gossypifolia</i>	ASSET	STATE
Bitou bush	<i>Chrysanthemoides monilifera subsp. rotundata</i>	CONTAINMENT	STATE
Black knapweed	<i>Centaurea x moncktonii</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Black willow	<i>Salix nigra</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Blackberry	<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg. (Blackberry except the varieties Chester Thornless, Dirksen Thornless, Loch Ness, Silvan, Black Satin, Murrindindi, Smooth Stem, Thornfree and Chehalem)	ASSET	STATE
Boneseed	<i>Chrysanthemoides monilifera</i> subspecies <i>monilifera</i>	ERADICATION	STATE
Bridal veil creeper	<i>Asparagus declinatus</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Broadleaf pepper tree	<i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i>	ERADICATION	LOCAL
Broomrape	<i>Orobanche</i> spp. (all species except the native <i>O. cernua</i> var. <i>australiana</i> and <i>O. minor</i>)	PREVENTION	STATE
Cabomba	<i>Cabomba caroliniana</i>	ASSET	STATE
Cape/montpellier broom	<i>Genista monspessulana</i>	ASSET	STATE
Cat's claw creeper ‡	<i>Dolichandra unguis-cati</i>	ASSET	STATE
Chilean needle grass	<i>Nassella neesiana</i>	ASSET	STATE
Chinese celtis	<i>Celtis sinensis</i>	CONTAINMENT	LOCAL
Chinese knotweed	<i>Persicaria chinensis</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Chinese violet	<i>Asystasia gangetica subsp. micrantha</i>	PREVENTION	REGIONAL
Climbing asparagus	<i>Asparagus africanus</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Coolatai grass	<i>Hyparrhenia hirta</i>	ERADICATION	LOCAL
Coral creeper	<i>Barleria repens</i>	PREVENTION	REGIONAL
Corky passionfruit	<i>Passiflora suberosa</i>	CONTAINMENT	LOCAL
Crofton weed	<i>Ageratina adenophora</i>	ASSET	LOCAL
East Indian hygrophila	<i>Hygrophila polysperma</i>	PREVENTION	REGIONAL
Eurasian water milfoil	<i>Myriophyllum spicatum</i>	PREVENTION	STATE

COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	OBJECTIVE	LISTING
Fireweed	<i>Senecio madagascariensis</i>	ASSET	STATE
Flax-leaf broom	<i>Genista linifolia</i>	ASSET	STATE
Frogbit / Spongeplant	<i>Limnobium spp. (all species)</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Giant devil's fig	<i>Solanum chrysotrichum</i>	PREVENTION	REGIONAL
Giant rats tail grass	<i>Sporobolus pyramidalis</i>	PREVENTION	REGIONAL
Giant reed	<i>Arundo donax</i>	ASSET	REGIONAL
Glory lily	<i>Gloriosa superba</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Gorse ††	<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	ASSET	STATE
Green cestrum	<i>Cestrum parqui</i>	ASSET	REGIONAL
Grey sallow	<i>Salix cinerea</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Groundsel bush	<i>Baccharis halimifolia</i>	ERADICATION	LOCAL
Hawkweed	<i>Hieracium spp (all species)</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Holly-leaved senecio	<i>Senecio glastifolius</i>	CONTAINMENT	REGIONAL
Honey locust	<i>Gleditsia tricanthos</i>	CONTAINMENT	LOCAL
Horsetails	<i>Equisetum spp.</i>	CONTAINMENT	REGIONAL
Hydrocotyl/Water pennywort	<i>Hydrocotyle ranunculoides</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Hygrophilla	<i>Hygrophilla costata</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Hymenachne	<i>Hymenachne amplexicaulis</i>	ASSET	STATE
Karoo acacia	<i>Vachellia karroo (syn. Acacia karroo)</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Kei apple	<i>Dovyalis caffra</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Kidney leaf mud plantain	<i>Heteranthera reniformis</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Kochia	<i>Bassia scoparia (excluding subsp. trichophylla)</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Koster's curse	<i>Clidemia hirta</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Kudzu	<i>Pueraria lobata</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Lagarosiphon	<i>Lagarosiphon major</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Lantana	<i>Lantana camara</i>	ASSET	STATE
Leaf cactus	<i>Pereskia aculeata</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Leafy elodea	<i>Egeria densa</i>	CONTAINMENT	LOCAL
Lippia	<i>Phyla canescens</i>	ERADICATION	LOCAL
Long leaf willow primrose	<i>Ludwigia longifolia</i>	CONTAINMENT	LOCAL
Madeira vine	<i>Anredera cordifolia</i>	ASSET	STATE



Asparagus Weed



Broadleaf Pepper



Cats Claw Creeper

COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	OBJECTIVE	LISTING
Mesquite	<i>Prosopis spp.</i>	ASSET	STATE
Mexican feather grass	<i>Nassella tenuissima (syn. Stipa tenuissima)</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Miconia	<i>Miconia spp. (all species)</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Mikania vine	<i>Mikania micrantha</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Mimosa	<i>Mimosa pigra</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Ming fern	<i>Asparagus macowanii var. zuluensis</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Mother of millions	<i>Bryophyllum species</i>	ASSET	LOCAL
Mysore thorn	<i>Caesalpinia decapetala</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Nodding thistle	<i>Carduus nutans</i>	PREVENTION	REGIONAL
Opuntia	<i>Opuntia spp., Cylindropuntia spp., Austrocylindropuntia spp. (Excludes O. ficus- indica)</i>	ASSET	STATE
Ox eye daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	ERADICATION	LOCAL
Pampas grass	<i>Cortaderia jubata</i>	ASSET	REGIONAL
Paper mulberry	<i>Broussonetia papyrifera</i>	PREVENTION	LOCAL
Parkinsonia	<i>Parkinsonia aculeata</i>	ERADICATION	STATE
Parthenium weed	<i>Parthenium hysterophorus</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Pond apple	<i>Annona glabra</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Prickly acacia	<i>Vachellia nilotica (syn. Acacia nilotica)</i>	PREVENTION	STATE



Frogbit

Kei Apple

Opuntia

Rattlepods	<i>Crotolaria lunata</i>	ASSET	LOCAL
Rubber vine	<i>Cryptostegia grandiflora</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Sagittaria	<i>Sagittaria platyphylla</i>	ASSET	STATE
Salvinia ††	<i>Salvinia molesta</i>	ASSET	STATE
Scotch/English broom ‡	<i>Cytisus scoparius subsp. scoparius</i>	ASSET	STATE
Sea spurge	<i>Euphorbia paralias</i>	CONTAINMENT	REGIONAL
Senegal tea	<i>Gymnocoronis spilanthoides</i>	CONTAINMENT	REGIONAL
Serrated tussock ††	<i>Nassella trichotoma</i>	ASSET	STATE
Siam weed	<i>Chromolaena odorata</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Sicilian sea lavender	<i>Limonium hyblaenum</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Sicklethorn	<i>Asparagus falcatus</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL
Silver-leaf nightshade	<i>Solanum elaeagnifolium</i>	ASSET	STATE
Singapore daisy	<i>Sphagneticola trilobata</i>	ASSET	REGIONAL
Skunk vine	<i>Paederia foetida</i>	ERADICATION	REGIONAL

COMMON NAME	BOTANICAL NAME	OBJECTIVE	LISTING
Spanish broom	<i>Spartium junceum</i>	PREVENTION	REGIONAL
Spotted knapweed	<i>Centaurea stoebe subsp. australis</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Tropical soda apple	<i>Solanum viarum</i>	ERADICATION	STATE
Water caltrop	<i>Trapa spp. (all species)</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Water hyacinth	<i>Eichhornia crassipes</i>	CONTAINMENT	STATE
Water lettuce	<i>Pistia stratiotes</i>	PREVENTION	REGIONAL
Water poppy	<i>Hydrocleys nymphoides</i>	CONTAINMENT	REGIONAL
Water soldier	<i>Stratiotes aloides</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Water star grass	<i>Heteranthera zosterifolia</i>	PREVENTION	REGIONAL
White blackberry / Mysore raspberry	<i>Rubus niveus</i>	PREVENTION	REGIONAL
Willow-leaf primrose/ Water primrose	<i>Ludwigia peruviana</i>	ASSET	REGIONAL
Willows †	<i>Salix spp. (excludes S. babylonica, S. X calodendron & S. x reichardtiji)</i>	ASSET	STATE
Witchweed	<i>Striga spp. (except the native S. parviflora)</i>	PREVENTION	STATE
Yellow bells	<i>Tecoma stans</i>	ERADICATION	LOCAL
Yellow burrhead	<i>Limnocharis flava</i>	PREVENTION	STATE



Salvinia



Senegal Tea



Water Poppy

ADMINISTRATION

Condition of Public Works

Council operates as a special (single) purpose authority which is to control declared priority weeds on the four constituent Councils roads and reserves. Council does not own public facilities as referred to in Section 428(2)(d) of the Local Government Act, 1993.

The only non-current assets held by Council are listed below:

A. Freehold Land

Re-valued July, 2019

B. Works Depot/Administration Office

Re-valued June, 2020.

Building in satisfactory condition.

C. Vehicles & Other Plant and Equipment

(i) Vehicles are only kept generally for 3 years or 60,000 km, whichever occurs first.

All vehicles are in first class condition.

(ii) Other plant and equipment are all in good condition.

D. Furniture and Fittings

Most is in a good condition.

Legal Proceedings

No legal proceedings were taken during the year for offences involving the failure to control declared priority weeds.

There were no outstanding legal matters carried forward.

Elected Members

Council has adopted a policy, "Payment of Expenses and the Provision of Facilities to Members". The objective of this policy is to reimburse the chairperson and members for expenses reasonably incurred in performing their duties and to provide them with a standard and range of facilities in discharging the functions of civic office.

The following allowances, fees and expenses have been provided to Members or incurred as a result of their activities during 2019/2020:

Chairperson's Allowance	\$11,060
Members' Fees	\$48,342
Travelling Expenses	\$876
Conference & Delegates Expenses	NIL
Local Government Association Subscriptions	\$1,878
Insurance	\$7,278
Miscellaneous Council Expenses	\$3,000

Limited use of facilities is available in accordance with Council's policy and no other expenses were incurred.

Attendance at Meetings by Board Members 2019/20 (Maximum 6)

Member	Council	Meetings	Notes
Clr. Brad Bunting	Blacktown	6	Elected 9/16.
Clr. Marcus Cornish	Penrith	4	Elected 9/12.
Clr. Julie Griffiths	Blacktown	5	Elected 4/17.
Clr. Amanda Kotlash	Hawkesbury	6	Elected 9/16.
Clr. Karen McKeown OAM	Penrith	5	Elected 9/16.
Clr. Samuel Uno	The Hills	3	Elected 2/20.
Clr. Nathan Zamprogno	Hawkesbury	6	Elected 9/16. Chair
Clr. Robyn Preston	The Hills	5	Elected 10/18. Deputy
Clr. Brooke Collins OAM	The Hills	2	Elected 9/17.

Senior Staff Remuneration

The total remuneration provided during the year, comprising the salary and employer's contribution to superannuation, including payments of accumulated benefits was \$149K.

The General Manager is the only Senior Staff member. He commenced his duties on 1 November 2010.

Major Contracts Awarded

No major contracts were awarded during the year.

Bush Fire Hazard Reduction Program

Council is a special (single) purpose authority charged with responsibilities for Declared Priority Weeds. Thus, bush fire activities are not within Council's functions.

Private Works

Council provided a contract spraying and aquatic weed harvesting services. Most of the work carried out during the year was undertaken on behalf of Constituent Councils,

State Government Agencies or Departments, regular private property weed control activities is taking place, however these are generally of low economic value. Quite a proportion of these works arise from requests from landholders whom have been visited by council inspectors.

Contributions/Donations

There were no contributions or donations under Section 356 of the Local Government Act.

Human Resources Activities

Most staff undertook a number of training courses to assist them in their career development, and necessary, to meet appropriate certification and license requirements. Please also refer to Priority Weeds Control Operations Report and Performance Management Report for further Human Resources Activities.

Activities to Implement EEO Management Plan

An Equal Opportunity Management Policy and strategies were adopted in accordance with the Local Government Act 1993. All Council articles and policies adhere to EEO policies. A harassment policy and anti-bullying policy has been adopted and a contact officer has been appointed as the first point of contact. EEO and anti-discrimination publications and articles concerning sexual harassment are all distributed to staff when received.

Number of Staff

Full-time	8
Trainee	2
Part Time	3
Casual	0

TOTAL EFT (Equivalent Full Time) 12.2

External Bodies Exercising Council Functions

There were no external bodies to which Council delegated any of its functions.

Controlling Interest in Companies

Council did not hold a controlling interest in any companies either singularly or jointly with other Councils.

Partnerships, Co-operatives and Joint Ventures

Council was not a party to any partnerships, co-operatives or joint ventures.

Rates and Charges Written Off

Council is not a rating authority and therefore rates and extra charges are not written off. No debts were written off.

Overseas Visits Funded by Council

There were no overseas visits undertaken during the year by Council Members or staff.

Activities for Children

Council is a single purpose authority charged with the administration of declared priority weeds. Thus activities for children are not within Council's functions.

Access and Equity Service to All

Council advertised services and access to services, as required by the Local Government Act. However, for this "single purpose" County Council, only minimal advertising was necessary.

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (GIPA Act) – Statistical Report

The statistics for requests for information via GIPA Act were as follows

2019/2020

Public Info Requests	Nil
Public Info Results	Nil

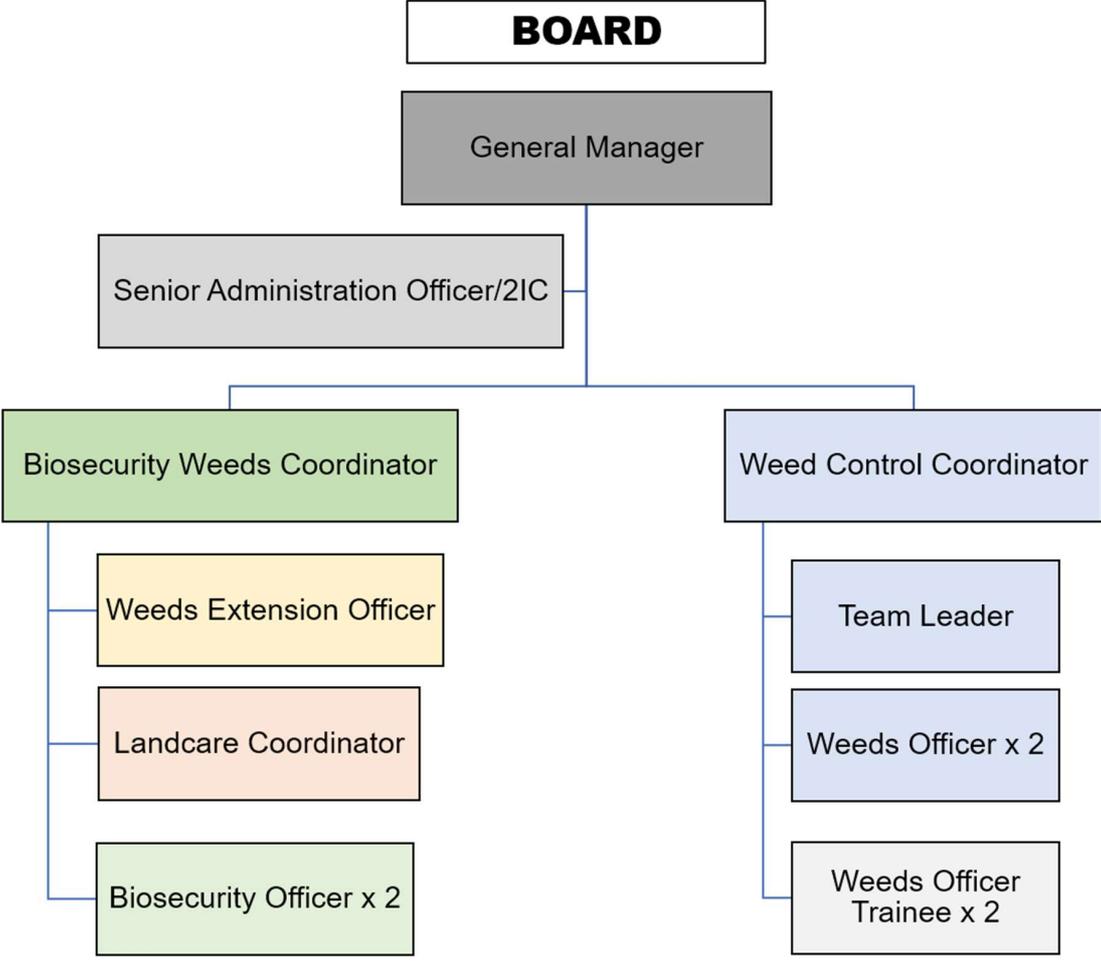
There are no circumstances in which the Ombudsman has made enquiries of Council.

Council has published its "Publication Guide" on the website under the guidelines of the Act. This guide navigates public access to Council information.

GOVERNANCE HIGHLIGHTS

6 Council Board Meetings Convened		Annual Report Produced as per Local Government Regulation
	Annual Grant Reports Submitted	
Operational Plan Reviewed and Adopted		Long Term Financial Plan Reviewed and Adopted
	Workforce Management Strategy Reviewed and Reported to Board	
Corporate and Employment Policies Reviewed as per Schedule		Expected Grant Funding Achieved

HRCC ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



PLANNING AND POLICY DOCUMENTS

Council participates in the discharge of the following legislation, policy and plans:

State Legislation

Local Government Act 1993 (and Regulations) (NSW)

Biosecurity Act 2015 (NSW)

Workplace Health and Safety Act 2012 (NSW)

Pesticides Act 1999 (NSW)

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW)

State Weeds Strategies

NSW Invasive Species Plan 2017-2022

Council Policies

Code of Conduct

Code of Meeting Practice (OLG)

Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Council Members

Procurement Policy

Protected Disclosures Act 1994 – Internal Reporting Policy

Staff Records Management

Anti-Bullying Policy

Vehicle Leaseback Management Policy

Investment Policy

Pesticide Use Notification Plan

Biosecurity Local Weeds Plan

Employee Assistance Program

Pandemic Response Policy

Local Procedures and Plans

Financial Reports; Auditor's Reports and Annual Reports to the Community

Delegation of Authority – via Council Minutes.

10 Year Business Activity Statement 2017-2027 (includes Resourcing Strategy)

4 Year Delivery Plan 2017-2021

Operational Plan 2019/2020

Minutes of Council and Committee Meetings

Minutes of All Staff Meetings

Authorised Officers – Authority and Powers of Entry

Pecuniary Interest Disclosures – Members, General Manager, Operations Manager,
Authorised Officers

Register of Investments

Summary and Statement of Affairs

Process for Inspection of Private Properties

Pandemic Response Plan

Employee Management

Personal Files

Values Statement

E. E. O

WHS System

Special Leave for Emergencies and Fire Fighting

Staff Recruitment & Procedures

Employee Policies and Procedures Register

MEMBER COUNCIL INFORMATION

Role of Council Members

Members' duties include attending Council and Committee meetings, and organised site inspections as required. They are responsible for making major decisions and deciding on policies which set the direction Council will take in its operations, services and activities. They are not paid a salary but receive a fee. Most Councillors have other full or part-time jobs.

Your Representatives

The Hills Shire Council



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Clr Karen McKeown OAM
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MEMBER COUNCIL PROCESS

Each of the four constituent Councils elect two delegates from amongst their Councillors to comprise the governing body of the Hawkesbury River County Council.

If the number of Councillors seeking election is no more than the required two delegates, then membership of the County Council is by appointment of the constituent Council.

These elections or appointments take place after the constituent Councils quadrennial (four yearly) elections are finalised or to fill a casual vacancy.

The resultant eight, in the case of this County Council, comprise the governing body. For County Councils these delegates are referred to as “Members”.

The Chairperson is elected or, if unopposed appointed, in October each year.

The County Council meets regularly on a two monthly basis and at other times when required.



FINANCE, ACCOUNTING & ADMINISTRATION

Functions/Activity – Cost Report

Council's audited financial results are presented in the form of General Purpose Financial Statements. This same financial information is used in compiling this report which is based on the following functions/activities:

(i) Health – Noxious Weeds

Administration, inspections and weed control activities associated with priority weeds.

(ii) Economic Affairs

Private Works (Category 2 Business Activity) related to weed control on private lands and training services for O.H & S.

(iii) Governance

Costs relating to the Council's role as a component of democratic government, including members' fees and expenses, subscriptions to local authority associations, meetings of council and policymaking committees, reporting, area representation and public disclosure and compliance, together with related administration costs.

(iv) Administration

Costs not otherwise attributed to other functions.



A copy of Council's Audited Financial Statements 2019/2020 are included on the following pages.

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