

Final Report for weed control works implemented through the CEP project

Summary

Works under the CEP grant commenced end Dec 2019 and onground works concluded November 2020. A budget of \$8,000 was allocated to engage two weed control contractors.

40 Priority weed control sites in the project area were revisited, and followup actions implemented as appropriate. 6 new sites were identified in the project – in the Kings Road area – and these have been partially or completely controlled. Weed control records have been updated in detail, and those records are available on request.

6 public weed working bees were held as part of this project (exceeding the target of 2 working bees), with total attendance being 90 people. A public presentation on 'Mount Roland Weeds' was made to the Kentish Garden Club in March 2021 – around 70 attendees.

Private properties adjoining Kings Road were a major focus of onground works, with control actions implemented at 6 new properties in this project. Here particularly foxgloves, but also thistles (slender and scotch) have been partially controlled, but remain a significant problem requiring further intensive works, especially on 3 properties at the top of Kings Road, adjoining the Mount Roland Reserve.

Further identified foxglove populations in the Paradise plantation area adjoining the Minnow River remain a priority for control, but were not controlled through this project, due to insufficient resources. Other weeds on private properties in areas proximal to Mount Roland Regional Reserve – particularly the roads leading up Mount Roland from Claude Road – are presently uncontrolled and an ongoing concern.

Overall, followup on previously identified weed sites is proving very effective. Many sites – particularly Spanish heath sites – after 10 years of management now show no weed presence at all. However other sites – particularly those with Montpellier broom – remain persistent with ongoing followup required to prevent further seed set. The control of foxgloves is a huge and daunting task, requiring a coordinated cross tenure approach with the active support of many different land managers/owners. Many individual landowners are investing significantly in foxglove control, but the problems are large, cross tenure and often well beyond their individual capacity.

The extent of the current foxglove threat to Mount Roland is suggested by the following picture, with the three principal 'foxglove properties' on Kings Road highlighted in yellow. Other properties – both to the east and west also contain significant foxglove populations, and are yet to be mapped or controlled.



Details of weed working bees held for CEP project

Location	Date	Number of attendees	Volunteer Hours contributed
Kings Road	21.12.19	15	30
Kings Road	28.12.19	12	24
McCoys Road/Gowrie Park	28.1.20	11	44
Entrance to 987 Claude Road (weed control + rubbish removal)	29.2.20	23	50
Kings Road	13.9.20	13	26
Claude Road opp Vale (weed removal + rubbish removal)	10.10.20	16	35
Planning, organizing, monitoring, reporting, followup @ 20 hours per working bee			120
Total		90	329

Recommendations for future works

1. Ongoing followup of identified weed sites is necessary, though the amount of time required for this task is diminishing.
2. Foxgloves have become a major problem, with significant and rapidly expanding populations in Paradise plantations, Kings Road, McCoys Road and Wildlife road, requiring urgent treatment. The Gowrie Park foxglove population was largely controlled in 2020, though followup will certainly be required. Funding gained through a Weed Action Fund grant will assist in ongoing foxglove control, though the problem is likely to be greater than the funding available, and certainly more followup will be required into the future.
3. Control of *Kunzea ericoides* in the Gowrie Park area remains an urgent priority.
4. Weeds on private properties – particularly those on the various roads leading up Mount Roland from Claude Road – are a real source of concern. A program to engage and educate landowners, and to provide incentives for control, would be very beneficial.
5. Digital mapping of all weed sites to detail all locations and their attributes on a Google Earth background is a priority. Such digital images would be a significant asset for planning and implementing future works.
6. Further publicity and promotion of the weed control program would build support and enthusiasm for the project.