

Roadside Weeds and Pests Program Control Plan 2023-2026

1: Council Name: Surf Coast Shire Council

2: Contact Details:

Name: Jane Spence

Position: Environment & Sustainability Manager

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Email: [REDACTED]

3: Regional context of noxious weed and pest animal management:

Surf Coast Shire Council is in south-western Victoria, 20 minutes from Geelong and 90 minutes from Melbourne. It is strongly influenced by physical and topographical features which impact on urban development and land management. The Shire is characterised by a diverse range of environments from rugged coastline and dense native forests to rolling, rural plains.

The southern part of the Shire consists of a linear pattern of coastal townships including Torquay, Jan Juc, Anglesea, Aireys Inlet, Fairhaven, and Lorne. Apart from Torquay and Jan Juc, these townships are sited on the coastal edge of the Otway Ranges and are surrounded by large areas of national and state park. North of the Otway Ranges is a large rural community, with population centres at Winchelsea, Moriac, and Deans Marsh.

Council is committed to improving pest plants and animal management on Council owned and managed land. A partnership approach with other land managers and the community is critical for effective pest plant and animal management, particularly as Council owns or manages just under 1% of land in the Shire. In terms of municipal roadsides, Council is responsible for managing approximately 1,500km of local rural roadsides, including approximately 513km of high conservation roadsides and 345km of medium conservation roadsides.

Historically, Council's focus for roadside pest management has been on Regionally Controlled weeds like Gorse and Blackberry and also rabbits, an established pest animal. State Government roadside funding has specifically targeted Serrated Tussock (in the priority containment line area), Gorse and Blackberry, Cape Tulip and rabbits.

Through past State Government funding initiatives Council has treated approximately 1000km per year of roadsides for Regionally Controlled weeds and pest animals (rabbits). There are currently no Regionally Prohibited weeds in the Shire, a situation Council is keen to maintain, by focusing Council resources on new and emerging pest plant and animals.

4: Community Consultation:

Surf Coast Shire Council is committed to working in partnership with community groups, private landowners and other land managers to manage pest plants and animals in the Shire. This partnership approach also applies to management of roadside weeds and pest animals.

Council is aware of key community concerns and priorities regarding pest plant and animal management in the Shire through regular interaction with the community including:

- Capacity building and support to key community groups via Council's Natural Environment Grants. Community groups include:
 - Upper Barwon Landcare Network
 - Surf Coast & Inland Plains Network (SCIPN)
 - Surf Coast Rabbit Action Network (SCRAN)
 - Geelong Landcare Network
 - Barrabool Hills Landcare
 - Anglesea, Aireys Inlet Society for the Protection of Flora and Fauna (ANGAIR)
 - Winchelsea Land & Rivercare
 - Surf Coast Energy Group
- Information and advice to residents (via phone and/or email) in response to a wide range of pest plant and animal concerns.
- Coverage of pest plant and animal issues via social media.

Council has also developed a variety of materials regarding pest plant and animal management that reflect and incorporate community concerns and priorities. These resources include:

- Council's website – general pest plant and animal advice
- Weeds of the Surf Coast Shire booklet featuring 80 weed species currently of concern

- *Top 20 Weeds* brochures for:
 - Jan Juc, Torquay, Bellbrae, Connewarre
 - Anglesea to Eastern View
 - Lorne, Deans Marsh, Bamba
 - Moriac, Freshwater Creek, Winchelsea, Barrabool Hills
- Council's Pest Plant and Animal Strategy which contains Council's priorities for pest plant and animal management on Council owned and managed land, including municipal roadsides.
- Indigenous Planting Guides (Rural and Urban Coastal) for advice on what to plant.

5: Stakeholder Consultation:

Dallas Gooding, Biosecurity Manager, Biosecurity Victoria, Agriculture Victoria, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action

The proposed Control Plan was emailed for comment/information in October as part of Council's Pest Plant & Animal Management Strategy reporting and Annual Action Plan to representatives from the following key community groups in the Shire actively engaged in pest plant and animal management work:

- Upper Barwon Landcare Network;
- Surf Coast & Inland Plains Network (SCIPN);
- Surf Coast Rabbit Action Network (SCRAN);
- Barrabool Hills Landcare
- Anglesea, Aireys Inlet Society for the Protection of Flora and Fauna (ANGAIR)

6: Relevant Policies, Strategies and Submissions:

State:

- Victoria's Biosecurity Strategy 2023
- Invasive Plants & Animals Policy Framework 2010
- Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994
- Local Government Act 1989
- Road Management Act 2004

Regional:

- Corangamite Invasive Plant and Animal Management Strategy 2010

Local:

- Surf Coast Shire Council Plan 2021-2025
- Pest Plant and Animal Strategy 2023
- Rabbit Management Policy

7: Objectives of the Plan:

This Plan documents the agreed and approved State Government priorities for roadside weed and rabbit control priorities on municipal roadsides in Surf Coast Shire for 2023-2026 and the high-level priorities for Council roadside weed and pest management.

The aim of the Control Plan is to document priority control activities agreed with the State Government and proposed by Council for 2023-2026 for the management of Regionally Controlled weeds and established pest animals (rabbits) on targeted municipal rural roadsides in the Surf Coast Shire.

Council's objectives for this Control Plan are to ensure that:

- Council's management of pest plants and animals on rural roadsides reflects best practices, meets legal requirements and is effective and proactive, to the extent possible given available State Government and Council funding.
- State Government funding is allocated to the agreed Agriculture Victoria weed and established pest animal priorities outlined in this Control Plan.
- Council continues to support and partner with community groups on pest plant and animal management, especially those groups that:
 - Have a high level of community participation/good history of community involvement,
 - Use best management practices; and
 - Are committed to a longer-term investment in pest plant and animal management.
- Previous investment in management of Regionally Controlled pest plant and animals is continued where possible; and
- High conservation roadsides are protected from Regionally Controlled and new and emerging weeds.

State Government/Agriculture Victoria Approved Work

The State Government has allocated Council \$29,123 annually for 2023 – 2026 with the following activities to be completed within each year of the Plan:

- Serrated tussock containment line stretching from Winchelsea through to Bellbrae to support previous investment (approximately \$12,000 annually)
- Rabbit control at Thompson/Freshwater Creek to support previous investment (approximately \$7,000 annually)
- Gorse and Blackberry at Deans Marsh to support previous investment (approximately \$8,000 annually)
- Cape Tulip (one-leaf) at Winchelsea/Buckley to support previous investment in local community control program (approximately \$2,000 annually)

Council Strategic Priorities

Available Council funds for pest plant and animal management on municipal roadsides in Surf Coast Shire will be directed in 2023 – 2026 to the following strategic priorities:

- Building on previous investment to maintain current condition.
- New and emerging weeds on roadsides such as African Weed-Orchid, African Lovegrass and including Weeds of National Significance (WoNS) with a current focus on reducing the spread of both Chilean and Texas Needle Grass.
- High conservation roadsides and priority roadsides on township fringes – weed management, primarily Regionally Controlled weeds.
- Rural roadsides – support primary producers by preventing weed spread onto their properties.
- Preventing weed spread by contractor grass slashing equipment during the annual grass slashing program.
- Rabbit management with community groups where the groups:
 - Have a high level of community participation/good history of community involvement,
 - Use best management practices; and
 - Are committed to a longer-term investment in pest plant and animal management.
- Ongoing community group capacity building and support through Council's Natural Environment grants, especially for those groups that meet the three criteria listed above.

Greater detail regarding Council priorities for pest plant and animal management on Council owned and managed land, including municipal roadsides, can be found in Council's Pest Plant and Animal Action Strategy <https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/Environment/Natural-environment/Weeds-of-the-Surf-Coast> including annual action plans and reporting.

8: Term of the Plan:

The plan will run for a maximum three-year period to 30 June 2026.

9: Full time equivalent (FTE) resourcing:

All grant monies will be directed to achieving the control plan activities using Council's approved panel of experienced pest plant and animal contractors at the treatment times specified. The implementation of this plan will be coordinated by Council's Environment Officer and the Environment Coordinator in accordance with the investment principles stated in this plan.

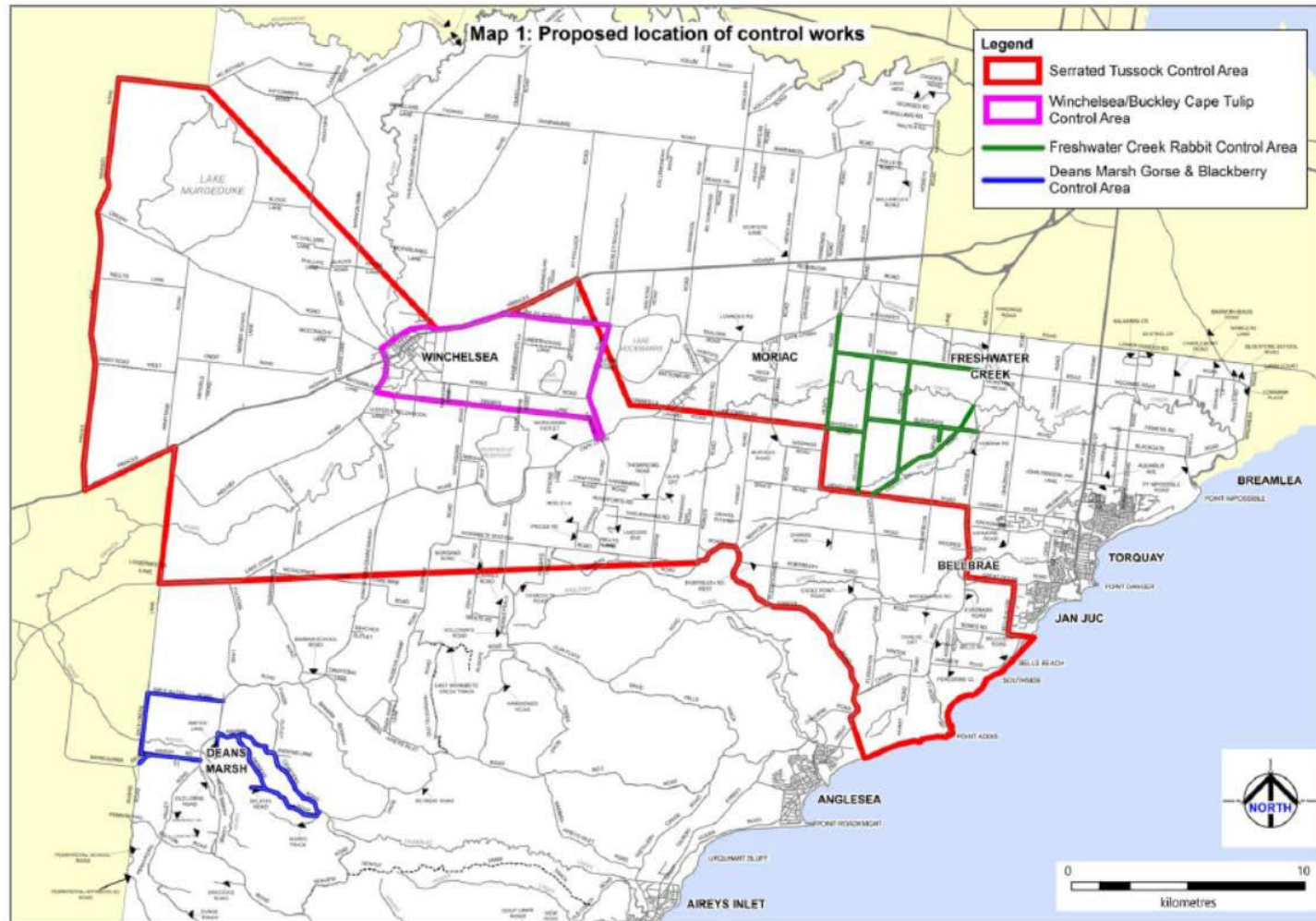
10: Target Species:

Common Name	Scientific Name	CaLP Act Classification	Priority Rating <i>1 highest - 4 lowest</i>	Reason for Management
Serrated Tussock	<i>Nassella trichotoma</i>	Regionally Controlled Weed	1	To maintain the section of the Serrated Tussock containment line within the Shire, stretching from north of Winchelsea through to the coast at Bellbrae
Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>	Established Pest Animal	1	To support previous investment in the Thompson/Freshwater Creek area (former compliance area)
Gorse	<i>Rosa rubiginosa</i>	Regionally Controlled Weed	1	To support previous investment in Deans Marsh (former compliance area)
Blackberry	<i>Rubus fruticosus (agg)</i>	Regionally Controlled Weed	1	To support previous investment in Deans Marsh (former compliance area)
Cape Tulip	<i>Moraea flaccida</i>	Regionally Controlled Weed	1	To support previous investment in local community control program

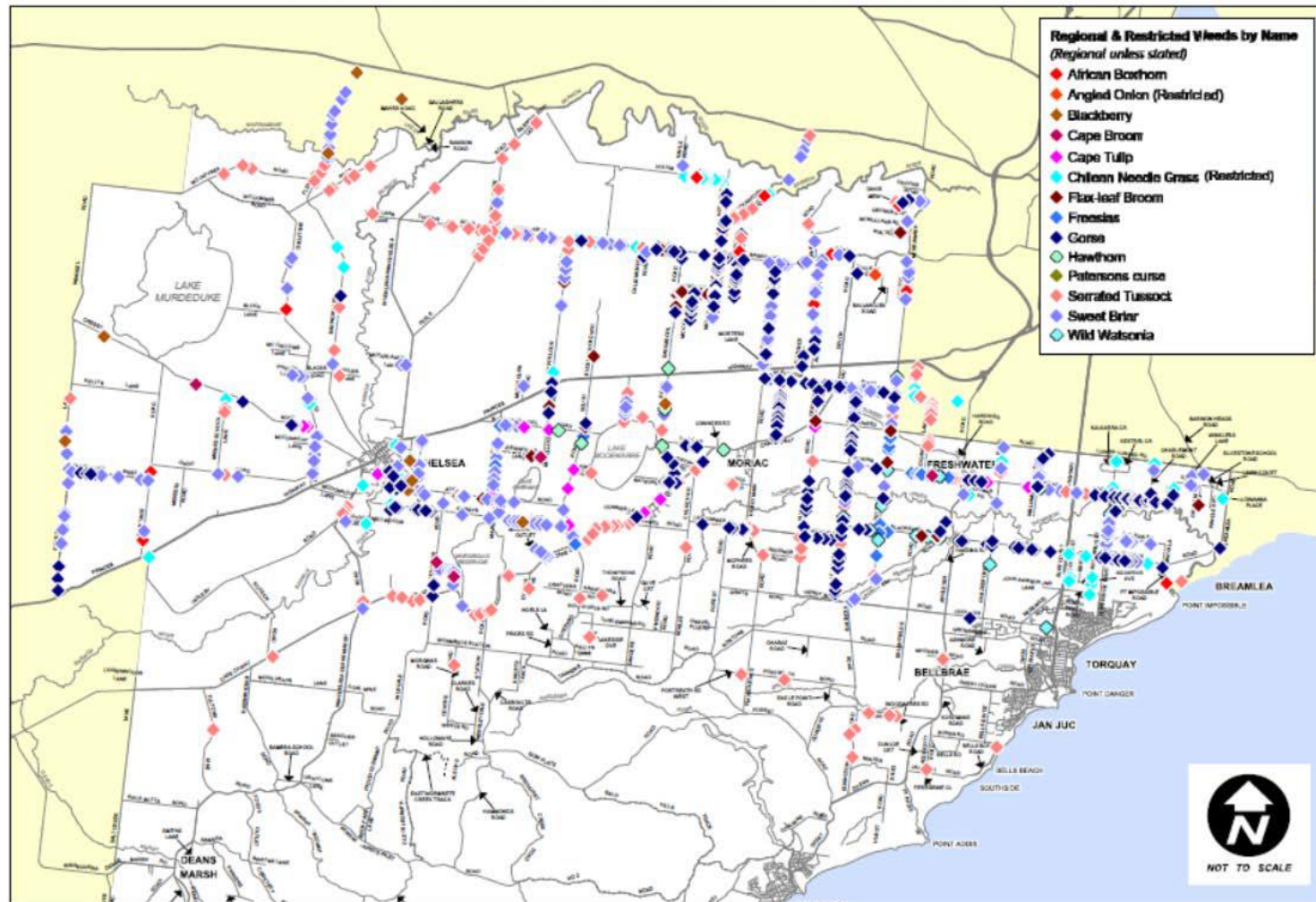
11: Control Measures and Target Roadsides:

Common Name	Control Measures	Location of Proposed Works	Estimated Length of Roadside to be Treated Annually	Approximate Annual Timing of Treatment
Serrated Tussock	Spot spray application of a registered herbicide in accordance with the product label	Serrated Tussock containment line (north of Winchelsea through to the coast at Bellbrae)	430km (approx.)	April to September
Rabbit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Warren and/or harbour removal (where possible) on roadsides to support adjacent landholders who are actively participating in warren /harbour removal in the vicinity of Loutitt Bay/Woodland & Blackgate Roads, Pettavel Road, Willowite/Dickins Roads. - Fumigation of warrens where warren destruction is not possible. 	Thompson/Freshwater Creek priority area	63km (approx.)	February to September
Gorse and Blackberry	Spot spray application of a registered herbicide in accordance with the product label	Deans Marsh	35km (approx.)	January to March
Cape Tulip	Spot spray application of a registered herbicide in accordance with the product label	Winchelsea/Buckley	114km (approx.)	September to October

12: Maps:



Map 2: Known infestations of Regionally Controlled Weeds and Restricted Weeds



13: Declarations:

Council will:

- Publish this approved plan (or approved variation to this plan if relevant) on its website within 28 days of approval and ensure copies are available for public inspection at Council's office(s). Any personal information contained in the control plan should be redacted prior to publishing. The signatures on the approved control plan may also be redacted prior to publishing.
- Coordinate the implementation of this plan on council managed roadsides in accordance with the investment principles stated in this plan and the control measures specified.
- Implement best practice weed hygiene principles and protocols.
- Maintain accurate records sufficient to provide evidence that the plan has been carried out and provide these on request.
- Obtain approval from Agriculture Victoria before substantially modifying or varying the plan.
- Carefully consider any proposals from Agriculture Victoria to modify or vary the plan in response to changed circumstances.

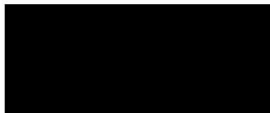
Council Declaration

I declare that I am an authorised representative and the information given on this form is complete and correct.

Key Council Contact Name: Jane Spence – Manager Environment & Sustainability

Date: 5 January 2024

Signature:



Chris Pike - General Manager Placemaking & Environment:

Date: 5 January 2024



Signature:

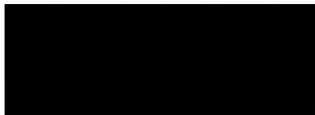
Agriculture Victoria Endorsement

I declare that I am an authorised representative and that this plan has been reviewed and aligns with eligible activities.

Agriculture Victoria Regional Biosecurity Manager – Plants, Chemicals and Invasives

Name: Dallas Gooding

Date: 8 January 2024



Signature: