

APPENDIX 5

Chilean Needle Grass



Snowy Monaro Regional Council Local Management Plan for Chilean needle grass (*Nassella neesiana*)

Introduction

Chilean needle grass is closely related to serrated tussock (*Nassella trichotoma*). It invades both introduced and native grasslands of south-eastern Australia. It is relatively unpalatable and reduces productivity by displacing more desirable pasture species. Heavy infestations can decrease productivity by as much as 50% during summer. The sharp seedhead of Chilean Needle Grass causes injury to stock and downgrades wool, skins and hides.



Chilean needle grass germinates in autumn and spring and at other times of the year given adequate moisture and temperature. Seed heads emerge during late spring and when mature have a very distinctive purplish colour. The individual seeds are very sharp at the apex. By late February, most of the seed has been shed from the plant and can be found on the ground. Generally seeds are spread by attachment to animals or machinery.

Purpose of this plan

To specify the control measures that a landholder must implement to ensure that his/her General Biosecurity Duty is discharged in relation to Chilean Needle Grass

Legal status

The management of invasive weeds in NSW is governed by the *Biosecurity Act 2015*. The Local Control Authority (Snowy Monaro Regional Council) is responsible for ensuring the prevention, elimination, minimization and management of the biosecurity risk posed or likely to be posed by invasive weeds. It is also responsible for the development, implementation, coordination and review of invasive weed control programs within its area of jurisdiction.

Any person dealing (eg the owner or occupier of land) with Chilean Needle Grass must comply with his or her General Biosecurity Duty.

Biosecurity ACT 2015 – General Biosecurity Duty

Any person who deals with biosecurity matter or a carrier and who knows, or ought reasonably to know, the biosecurity risk posed or likely to be posed by the biosecurity matter, carrier or dealing has a biosecurity duty to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the biosecurity risk is prevented, eliminated or minimised.

Control Objective

The primary objective of this plan is to reduce the negative impact of Chilean Needle Grass on the Snowy Monaro Region's economic, environmental and social sustainability.

Council requirements

Snowy Monaro Regional Council has a duty as Local Control Authority to inspect all land in connection with its weed control functions. In achieving this it must ensure the management of the biosecurity risk posed or likely to be posed by weeds within its area of jurisdiction.

Surveillance Council inspects private and public lands for the presence of Chilean needle grass infestations. Land upon which Chilean Needle Grass has been identified is inspected biennially. Frequency of inspection increases in cases of non-compliance; the frequency of which is determined by the level of risk posed by the infestation(s).

Reporting Council provides an inspection report to the land owner/occupier following inspection. The report shall indicate the level of infestation, its spatial distribution on the property and the level of weed control required by the owner/occupier. Infestation data is reported to the NSW Biosecurity Information System.

Enforcement Council will enforce the control of Chilean Needle Grass where non-compliance is identified. Enforcement measures may include the issue of a penalty infringement notice, entering the land and controlling infestations at the owner/occupier's expense, or the issue of a court attendance notice. Penalties for non-compliance with the *Biosecurity Act 2015* are significant.

Land owner/occupier requirements

All property managers have a responsibility to prevent, eliminate or minimize adverse effects on the economy, the environment and the community that arise from weeds. Where full control is feasible Council will enforce that requirement. Where widespread and established invasive species have become "naturalized" in our environment and full control is not deemed feasible by Council it will promote a strategy of minimization and containment.

Chilean needle grass is identified in the South East Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2017 – 2022. The plan specifies that Chilean Needle Grass must be managed in accordance with a published local weed management plan.



Isolated infestations

Objective: Prevent establishment
Action: Eliminate infestations

Established infestations

Objective: Containment. Reduce incidence in affected areas.

The growth of the plant must be controlled in a manner that continuously inhibits the ability of the plant to spread. Infestations may be managed in accordance with a staged control plan approved by Council. In situations where Council deems this requirement not reasonably practicable in accordance with Section 16 of the *Biosecurity Act 2015*, buffers and containment strategies may be introduced to protect priority assets.

Other restrictions Land managers must mitigate the risk of introducing this weed to their land. The plant or parts of the plant must not be traded, carried, grown or released into the environment.