

Noxious weeds Macalister Irrigation District

What types of weeds are there in the MID?

Noxious weeds are classified under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 and classification varies according to species and catchment. Over time, they might change when a new species is identified or when an existing species is eradicated or controlled.

Once identified, weeds are classified into four categories:

1. State Prohibited Weeds do not occur in Victoria, or occur in Victoria but it is reasonable to expect that they can be eradicated from the State. Their detection must be reported to the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) which will develop and implement an eradication program. DPI will cover all costs associated with the eradication of State Prohibited Weeds.
2. Regionally Prohibited Weeds do not occur in or are not widely distributed in a catchment, but are capable of growing and spreading further. The goal is to completely eradicate Regionally Prohibited Weeds from a catchment over a number of years.
3. Regionally Controlled Weeds are species which are widely distributed across a catchment and are beyond eradication. The goal is to prevent the spread of these species by controlling their growth and spread.
4. Restricted Weeds pose a serious threat to agricultural, environmental and social values. These species must not be sold or traded within Victoria.

Who is responsible for making decisions about noxious weeds in the Macalister Irrigation District?

The local Catchment Management Authority (CMA), in this case the West Gippsland CMA, is responsible for recommending to the Minister the appropriate classification for each weed species within the catchment. The Minister is responsible for declaration of a species as noxious.

Who is responsible for managing Regionally Prohibited Weeds and Regionally Controlled Weeds?

Land owners and land managers are responsible for managing Regionally Prohibited Weeds and Regionally Controlled Weeds on the land they own or manage. Regionally Prohibited Weeds must be managed with the aim of eradication. Regionally Controlled Weeds must not spread from their property onto surrounding properties.

- Private land owners are responsible for managing weeds on their land and on Southern Rural Water easements (except the actual asset components).
- Southern Rural Water (SRW) is responsible for managing weeds on its asset components and reserves.
- VicRoads is responsible for managing weeds on and along declared roads.
- Public land managers are responsible for managing weeds on public land.
- Local Shire Councils are responsible for managing weeds on local Shire Council / municipal roads.

If any treatment is to be undertaken which might result in any disturbance of native vegetation, culturally significant areas or waterways, you should contact the responsible authority - being Local Government, cultural heritage and/or Catchment Management Authority - prior to the works being started.

What is a SRW asset component?

A SRW asset is a channel or drain. Components of these assets include those parts that shape and define it - the waterway, banks, berms, access tracks, fences and any controlling structures.

- **Easements** are owned by land owners but SRW structures, such as channels or drains, have been/may be constructed on their property. SRW staff need on-going access to easements so they can operate and maintain these structures.

As the land is not owned by SRW, the management of weeds (including noxious weed control) is the responsibility of the land owner.

SRW is only responsible for weeds in the waterways or on any component that forms part of the asset, and will only use chemicals that are registered for use in and around waterways or mechanical means for weed management and control.

- **A reserve** is a parcel of crown land acquired by SRW or its predecessors on which channels and drains have been constructed. They are owned and managed by SRW for the purpose of water supply or drainage. Their management, including noxious weed control, is the responsibility of SRW - whether infestations occur on the asset components or reserve areas adjacent to them.

Are most of SRW's assets located on an easement or reserve?

The majority of SRW assets are on easements. Most Certificate of Title documents identify where easements have been created on a land owner's property. If you are unsure of whether an easement exists on your property, you should contact SRW.

What chemicals can be used on SRW easements and near waterways?

Only herbicides that are registered for use in or near waterways can be used on SRW easements. As new chemicals and weed management technologies become available, it's always best to check the use of these products with SRW before spraying weeds on your property.

Retailers can usually supply Material Safety Data Sheets to help you with your quality assurance schemes.

When using chemicals always refer to the label.

What can I do about my neighbour's weeds?

If your neighbour is not managing or controlling weeds on their property, you can contact your local DPI office or the Customer Service Centre on 136 186. The DPI will ensure that those people responsible for weed control are informed of their responsibilities and obligations.

Under the Catchment and Land Protection Act 1994 the DPI can serve notices on non-compliant land owners.

More information

For more information, contact us on 1300 139 510 or visit www.srw.com.au

For more information about noxious weeds and their control contact the DPI on **136 186** or visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au/weeds.