

SOUTHERN ACT CATCHMENT GROUP Inc.

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Invitation

The Southern ACT Catchment Group as part of its project '*Regional education on African Lovegrass - an integrated approach*' invites you to attend the launch of a report on the distribution and abundance of African Lovegrass in the ACT. The report will be launched by Shane Rattenbury (MLA).

African Lovegrass is a fast spreading weed that is invading much of Australia. It is arguably the most invasive weed in the capital region and is found in all areas – suburban gardens, lawns, urban parks, road verges, farms and nature parks.

Author of the Report, Sarah Sharp has mapped the past and present distribution of African Lovegrass in the ACT along with the likely distribution of this highly invasive weed into the future. The report sets out likely scenarios for African Lovegrass distribution in 2020 depending on the budget allocated to its control.

Invasion from infected vehicles is clearly the most common vector for the continuing spread of African Lovegrass, particularly by mowers, but also other vehicles including cars. It is well known that mowers spread African Lovegrass, as well as other weeds such as Chilean Needle Grass. However, it is not feasible or practical to cease mowing in infested areas, as mowing is applied for several reasons of public safety along lines of sight on roadsides and to reduce fuel loads (ACT Parks and Conservation Service 2011b). Spread by water as a vector along the Murrumbidgee River corridor and then by wind into adjacent paddocks is maintaining the populations of African Lovegrass at other locations. It is clear from its rate of spread in the ACT over the past 10 years that African Lovegrass is highly resistant to drought, and utilises open space left by other less drought tolerant species to actively invade new areas.

In addition, it would be safe to say that there is a significant lack of awareness by many land owners of the highly invasive nature of the species (with the exception of most rural land managers), a lack of ability to recognise it and of the need to treat it.

This does not mean that it is a 'lost cause', and that there should be no further effort applied to treat it.

What appears to be the most important control measure that needs to be applied is to eradicate all isolated infestations before they become established, with a high level of effort being applied to prevent new infestations through more concentrated effort of applying vehicle hygiene, timing of mowing and vigilance to the presence of isolated plants in new locations.

Report Launch:

When: Wednesday 7th March 10am to 1130am

Where: Westwood Farm Kambah Pool Road, Kambah

For a **location map** for Westwood Farm please go to: http://www.lyh.org.au/lyh/?page_id=58 & scroll down the page.

Please RSVP to Steve Welch 6296 6400 or email info@sactcg.org.au by Monday 5 March.

Regional education on African Lovegrass - an integrated approach is supported by the Australian Government's Caring for Our Country Community Action Grants.