

INVASIVE PLANTS AND ANIMALS POLICY

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Responsible Officer:	Manager Parks and Open Space
Owner:	Parks and Open Space
Responsible Director:	Presentation and Assets
Relevant Legislation/Authority:	<i>Catchment and Land Protection Act (1994) (Vic)</i> <i>Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act (1988) (Vic)</i> <i>Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (1986) (Vic)</i>
DOCSETID:	4323788

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 1.1. provide a transparent framework for the management of invasive plants and animals on land owned and managed by the City;
- 1.2. protect and enhance the communities' wealth, well-being and biodiversity by reducing the impact of invasive species; and
- 1.3. ensure the City meets its legislative responsibilities and aligns with national and state policies for IPA management.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 IPA are one the most pervasive threats to the natural environment in Australia. IPA threaten waterways, biodiversity, aboriginal and heritage sites, parks, forests and rural land asset values and are a major concern for government and private land holders. IPA compete with native flora and fauna, spread disease and prey on desired species for food. This has a serious impact on agricultural production, amenities and hinders the long-term sustainability of the Greater Bendigo community.

- 2.2 Management of IPA is one of the City's responsibilities as a landowner. Treating weed infestations and pest animals, such as rabbits, are common activities in roadside management, management of parks and natural reserves and the design and management of streetscapes and recreation reserves.
- 2.3 This policy replaces the City's *Invasive Plants and Animals Strategy 2012/2015* and should be read in conjunction with the *Invasive Plants and Animals Procedures*.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and contractors engaged by the City.
- 3.2 This policy relates to IPA which the City has a legal responsibility to manage on its land as declared under the Act or that the City recognises as a significant environmental or agricultural weed or pest in the community.
- 3.3 This policy does not relate to invertebrates, domestic pets, farm animals, micro-organisms or any native species protected under Australian or Victorian legislation.

4. DEFINITIONS

In this policy:

Act means *Catchment and Land Protection Act (1994)* (Vic).

Asset Based Approach means prioritising control actions for a number of threats based on the relative value of identified assets that will be protected by the actions. Prioritisation should be based on maintaining the viability of important environmental assets and optimising outcomes for asset protection and management.

Biosecurity means a process designed to mitigate the risks and impacts to the economy, the environment, social amenity or human health associated with pests and diseases.

City means the Greater Bendigo City Council, being a body corporate constituted as a municipal Council under the *Local Government Act 1989* (Vic).

Containment means the application of measures in and around an infested area to prevent the spread of an IPA species. This may include reduction of the density or area of the infestation where appropriate. A containment program may include eradication of satellite infestations.

Declared means a species listed under the Act as a declared noxious weed or pest animal in Victoria. The Act defines four categories of noxious weeds:

- State Prohibited Weeds
- Regionally Prohibited Weeds
- Regionally Controlled Weeds
- Restricted Weeds.

DELWP means Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning.

DJPR means Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.

Eradication means when a species (including, for a plant, its propagules) has been removed or killed and no longer occurs at that site. In practice, this means that it can no longer be detected by recommended methods of survey for a defined period of time.

High Priority Areas means priority assets defined as having high environmental, cultural, social and economic values.

High Risk Species means IPA that, if not managed, would have a significant adverse impact on the environment, economy, social amenity or human health. They may be declared under the Act or an undeclared species.

IPA means invasive plants and animals.

Prevention means stopping or avoiding new IPA from establishing in the Greater Bendigo region. Prevention relates to species that are not yet present in the municipality. Preventing IPA's from establishing is the most cost-effective approach to managing the threat that they pose

Undeclared means a species not listed under the Act as a declared noxious weed or pest animal in Victoria.

5. PRINCIPLES

This policy promotes the following principles in the management of IPA:

5.1 Risk management

- 5.1.1 The City will incorporate management methods that avoid or minimize the risk to biodiversity, cultural and productive assets and to people.
- 5.1.2 The Biosecurity approach outlined clause 6.2.1 incorporates risk management principles to identify threats and then assess their relative risk to determine the most appropriate intervention to maximize public benefit. The risk management principles are as follows:
 - a) Prevention;
 - b) Eradication;
 - c) Containment; and
 - d) Asset Based Approach.

5.1.3 The risk management principles specified in clause 5.1.2 will aim to:

- a) prevent new IPA from establishing in the City;
- b) eradicate specific High Risk Species from the City;
- c) protect high priority assets from High Risk Species; and
- d) provide leadership and support community action to reduce the impacts of IPA.

5.2 Ethical

5.2.1 IPA are living organisms.

5.2.2 Control methods should be humane and cause minimal pain.

5.2.3 Prevention and methods that keep species at lower numbers reduces the need for culling.

5.3 Economical

The City will invest public money in the management of IPA where it produces the most public benefit and intervention will only occur where the benefits outweigh the costs.

5.4 Strategic

5.4.1 Decisions are based on the best available evidence;

5.4.2 Planning manages risks, is asset based and follows the Biosecurity approach;

5.4.3 Planning is targeted, coordinated and integrated across different programs and different stakeholders.

6. POLICY

6.1 The City will manage IPA based on the principles listed in clause 5 and the framework below

6.2 The City will:

6.2.1 use the Biosecurity approach outlined in the *Invasive Plants and Animals Procedures* for the management of IPA;

6.2.2 avoid future damage by preventing new IPA from entering or establishing in the municipality;

- 6.2.3 eradicate High Risk IPA's from the municipality;
- 6.2.4 provide leadership and support community action to reduce the impact of IPA;
- 6.2.5 protect high priority areas from High Risk IPA's;
- 6.2.6 Foster partnerships among landowners and land managers for effective management of IPA in the community.
- 6.2.7 work in partnership with other Government agencies to manage IPA's, including DELWP, DJPR and North Central Catchment Management Authority.
- 6.2.8 implementing surveillance programs as outlined in the *Invasive Plants and Animals Procedures*
- 6.2.9 The City will utilise the Decision Support Flowchart, contained in the *Invasive Plants and Animals Procedures*, to determine priorities among assets and provide criteria for a strategic and consistent approach to managing IPA's.

7. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 Manager Parks and Open Space

- 7.1.1 Managers are responsible for the implementation of this policy and *Invasive Plants and Animals Procedures* and ensuring employees, contractors, volunteers, comply as appropriate.

7.2 Employees and contractors

- 7.2.1 Are responsible for adhering to the policy and *Invasive Plants and Animals Procedures* as appropriate.

8. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Readers are encouraged to access relevant documents and/or resources which are available as per the below:

Agriculture Victoria:

<http://agriculture.vic.gov.au/agriculture/pests-diseases-and-weeds/protecting-victoria-from-pest-animals-and-weeds/legislation-policy-and-permits/legislation>

North Central Catchment Management Authority *North Central Invasive Plants and Animals Strategy 2010-2015*, (2010).

Victorian Government, *Invasive Plants and Animals Policy Framework* (2010)

M White, D Cheal, G.W Carr, R Adair, K Blood and D Meagher, 'Advisory List of Environmental Weeds in Victoria' (Technical Report Series No 287, Arthur Rylah Institute for Environmental Research, April 2018).

Further information or advice on this policy should be directed to Parks and Open Space

9. HUMAN RIGHTS COMPATIBILITY

The implications of this policy have been assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

10. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Business unit, a change to the name of a Federal or State Government department, and a minor update to legislation which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters this document must be made through consultation with the staff Consultative Committee and with the approval of EMT or where required, resolution of Council.

11. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date Approved	Responsible Officer	Unit	Change Type	Version	Next Review Date
<i>December, 2019</i>	<i>PG</i>	<i>Parks and Open Space</i>	<i>Develop</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3/12/2022</i>
<i>February, 2020</i>	<i>JN</i>	<i>Governance</i>	<i>Administrative (add approval date, Doc Set ID and amend review date)</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3/12/2022</i>