

TUSSOCK TIMES

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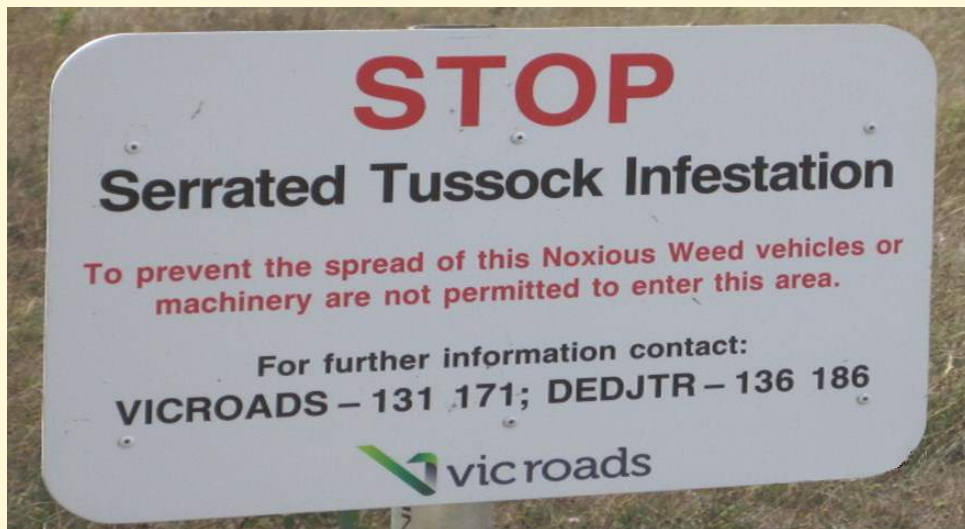
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These signs highlight the importance of preventing the spread of tussock

VICROADS TAKES STEPS TO PREVENT SPREAD

VicRoads has successfully undertaken targeted serrated tussock control works, funded under its Roadside Maintenance Program during the 2016/2017 financial year.

The works totalled \$19,596, \$8212 of which was Federal funding for works on the Western Freeway, while the remaining \$11,384 was State funding aimed at the Arterial Road network (VicRoads is responsible for M, A, B & C class roads). Vicroads have a statewide weed treatment program across all managed roads and a dedicated team of contractors and field staff.

The works included mapping and treating all serrated tussock infestations.

Planned upgrades for the Geelong-Bacchus Marsh Road and Western Freeway will be undertaken in serrated tussock affected areas.

The Western Freeway project will transect the boundary of the main containment area, so all care has been taken to ensure that serrated tussock is not spread as a result of the works.

Deven McPhan from Department of Economic Development Jobs Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) Victoria inspected five historic infestation sites on the Western Freeway, with only two of the sites having active infestations. Control of these infestations is currently being organised.

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VICROADS TO PREVENT SPREAD (CONTINUED)

Another infestation north of Creswick on the Clunes-Creswick Road was discovered next to a decommissioned gravel stack site. During treatment and surveillance numerous other infestations were found along the Clunes-Creswick Road. All infestations are monitored and treated annually by DEDJTR and Vic Roads.

The VSTWP work alongside VicRoads in extension areas and applaud VicRoads for their prompt treatment of serrated tussock and ongoing monitoring.

VicRoads serrated tussock site treated on the Western Freeway near Invermay, Ballarat (VicRoads)



LANDOWNER TUSSOCK SIGNS NOW AVAILABLE

Landowners who have been managing their serrated tussock infestations now have the opportunity to display signage on their roadside fences to raise awareness and encourage voluntarily management in their region.

The VSTWP have produced 100 signs to distribute through Landcare and community groups in areas of known serrated tussock infestations.

The signs promote the services available from the VSTWP and highlight the importance of controlling the noxious weed.

Ivan Carter, Community Engagement Officer at the VSTWP said "We would like to see community champions and landowners who are actively controlling their infestations to display the signage on roadside fences throughout Victoria". "The signs should be timely reminders for all landowners to monitor and treat infestations prior to seeding each season".

To register interest in displaying a serrated tussock sign, please contact your local Landcare / community group or email us at:

info@serratedtussock.com

VSTWP Committee Members and Extension Officers displaying the new serrated tussock signs.



NEW TUSSOCK SITES ON THE CROWN LAND RADAR

Crown Land Managers in the Grampians region have been successful in treating three new serrated tussock sites that were recently discovered by State Government staff and the VSTWP.

The three sites are at Rokewood Junction, Bungal and Lal Lal State Forests and in the Wimmera, north of Stawell at Bunyip Creek. All sites now have one or two seasons of treatment and monitoring.

Regional Forest Management Officer John Searby from Department of Environment Land Water and Planning (DELWP), Grampians Region said "the Rokewood Junction is an estimated 7ha and has been treated for the past 2 years". "The first year was spot spraying with a spray rig and spot spraying with knapsacks. It is now at a point it can be done with a knapsack with the work load being halved" noted Mr Searby.

The site in the State Forest's east of Ballarat, Bungal and Lal Lal, was discovered by the VSTWP during an Extension Project. The biggest surprise with this site was that the serrated tussock was able to spread in dense bushland, despite the shade and competition. "The populations within the State Forest East of Ballarat were mapped in 2015. This information has been used to create the spraying program and the contractor will be treating at known locations, and undertaking surveillance further up creek lines in the area" noted Mr Searby.

The third site is in the Wimmera, located at Bunyip Creek, in the Northern Grampians Shire. This infestation is also relatively new to DELWP and is being closely monitored by them, through the Good Neighbour Program. This site is relatively isolated and there are important agriculture assets in the region.

The VSTWP have been well supported by DELWP in our Extension Project Areas and it has been great to see some action taken on treating new sites as soon as they have been discovered on public land across the state, along with further monitoring and surveillance.



Recently discovered serrated tussock sites at Bungal State forest were treated in 2016 and 2017 (VSTWP)

VSTWP EDUCATE AT RURAL LIFESTYLE EXPO

The recent Weekly Times Rural Lifestyle Expo in Ballarat was a highlight of the busy field days and Ag Events Calendar of 2017.

VSTWP Community Engagement Officer Ivan Carter noted that "the event was an excellent chance to show landowners and managers live serrated tussock specimens, and run them through the identification process and treatment options"

Well over 5000 people attended the full day event, with the VSTWP delivering over 100 information sheets on best practice management of serrated tussock. "The most common question is still about identifying the plant successfully, and the live specimens is the best way to do this" stated Mr Carter.



TUSSOCK TASKS FOR WINTER

Serrated tussock is a declared noxious weed, which has detrimental impacts on the environment and agriculture. But how does it look throughout the year and when is best time to manage it?

Serrated tussock will continue to germinate throughout winter, although it can germinate at any time of the year after sufficient rain.

Winter is a good time to conduct surveillance. With the seasons cooling over winter, native and pasture grasses will remain low and stagnant making it easier to observe serrated tussock. When affected by frost serrated tussock will also appear a lighter bleached colour which makes it easier to detect.

At this time of year isolated plants are easy to manually remove with a mattock or spade, as the soil is soft. A registered herbicide can be used at this time of year, although application of the selective herbicide Flupropanate any later than June may not prevent serrated tussock from flowering. Always refer the product label. Winter is also a suitable time to control through pasture improvement or cultivation.

Further information can be found on the VSTWP website under 'Managing Serrated Tussock'.



Serrated Tussock can appear a white bleached colour in Winter, due to the frost and cold weather affecting the leaves and causing dieback. (VSTWP)

CONTRIBUTIONS AND FEEDBACK

The VSTWP would like to thank the following people for contributing to this edition of the Tussock Times:

Ivan Carter, Frank Carland (VicRoads), John Searby (DELWP).

The Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party welcomes your contributions and feedback.

For contributions, feedback or to be added to or removed from the mailing list, please contact:

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In our efforts to reduce the number of newsletters being printed if you currently receive a hardcopy of this newsletter but have access to email please send your email address to the Executive Officer.

More information on serrated tussock can be found on the Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party website: www.serratedtussock.com or by contacting the DELWP Customer Service Centre on 136 186.

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