

TUSSOCK TIMES

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DIGGERS REST BEST PRACTICE FIELD DAY SUCCESS

The VSTWP hosted a best practice management serrated tussock field day on Saturday May 5th in Diggers Rest, with 42 people attending throughout the day.

The field day featured a variety of guest speakers and demonstrations and spraying demonstrations from local contractor Aus Eco Solutions and a pasture improvement workshop from leading agronomist Charles Grech.

The landowners who attended had a variety of issues and questions for the experts and healthy discussions were had

throughout the day. *(continued on page 2)*



VSTWP Chairperson John Burgess



DIGGERS REST FIELD DAY (CONTINUED)

VSTWP Community Engagement Officer Ivan Carter said "we were very happy with the strong numbers and I am sure that all those in attendance were impressed by the knowledge of the guest speakers and demonstrations".

The day featured some useful spraying demonstrations, grazing and pasture management experts and informed the community of the threat serrated tussock poses and how to best mitigate the threats". Noted Mr Carter.

The Diggers Rest site provided for some useful discussion for the best way to remove the serrated tussock and establish a competitive pasture again on the site.

The VSTWP hopes that this field day will plant the seed for further best practice field days across the state in the coming year. Grants for serrated tussock field days are available through the VSTWP for groups wishing to host a field day in their region.

MANDY RETURNS AS A COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE

One of the leading experts in serrated tussock management has joined the VSTWP as a Community Representative, after previously contracting to the VSTWP as an Extension Officer for nearly a decade.

The VSTWP are very excited to have someone with the skills and experience of Mandy on board, and are thrilled that Mandy still has the enthusiasm to continue to the war on tussock!

Mandy has worked constructively and collaboratively with growers, farming system groups, industry and government to help build productive and sustainable farming systems. Since 1997, she has worked extensively on serrated tussock research and extension throughout the Corangamite and Port Phillip regions.

Mandy originally comes from a farming background and continues her passion for farming, now running an irrigated farm near Tongala with her husband and two children. She has completed tertiary studies in science, agriculture and agribusiness.

Mandy said she "looks forward to providing strategic direction to serrated tussock control and management in Victoria and beyond".

The VSTWP welcomes Mandy back on board with open arms and look forward to another decade of her wisdom and knowledge.



AERIAL SPRAYING PROGRAM SET FOR WINTER KICKOFF

The Moorabool Catchment Landcare group are aiming to undertake another aerial spraying program for serrated tussock over the July / August 2018 period, treating infestations that have been previously very difficult to reach.

Last year the group aerial treated several properties for serrated tussock between Ballan and Morrisons. The focus of aerial spraying is to treat the hard to reach or steep terrain sections of the Moorabool Catchment landscape, where there are heavy infestations.

In evaluating last year's spraying program, the Moorabool Catchment Landcare Group found there were varying results in terms of successful control. Some Landcare members believe that the serrated tussock may be starting to show signs of chemical resistance to Taskforce.

Coordinating an aerial spraying program can be an effective use of funds and can have a good economic return across a landscape. There is however a lot of work that goes into organising an aerial program, including working closely with the beekeeping groups to ensure that they are kept aware of spraying times to protect their hives from herbicides.

The group also undertakes inspections of all proposed spray sites to avoid any potentially sensitive ecological areas that may be negatively affected by spraying.

Good remnant vegetation exists along the Moorabool River (MCL)



The steep escarpments of the Moorabool River (MCL)

DEWLP MONITORING PRIORITY SITES IN GRAMPIANS REGION

Grampians DELWP are continuing with the treatment and monitoring of three key sites, supporting previous VSTWP Extension Areas and being a good neighbour to adjoining landowners.

The Midlands District has two projects based around the Rokewood Junction Containment Area and in the Bungal State Forest and the Lal Lal State Forest areas southeast of Ballarat. It has been estimated that a total of seven hectares have been treated over the past three years at these sites.

John Searby from DEWLP said that "this project was set up after being engaged by DEDJTR and the VSTWP around the containment area within this location. This area that has been treated the last three years compliments the surrounding properties that have mostly done works on their properties".

Tussock invading bushland near Lal Lal State Forest (VSTWP)



COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS ARRIVE

Have you noticed our new serrated tussock landowner signs popping up around the state? We want landowners who engage best practice serrated tussock management to place signs on their roadside fences, to help us promote control and treatment.

So far the VSTWP have distributed nearly 100 landowners signs to Landcare groups, landowners and land managers across the state, in a bid to gain traction amongst landowners in key areas.

Please let us know if you are interested in helping us spread the word and promote the control of this invasive plant. The VSTWP can deliver the signs to you. Contact us at info@serratedtussock.com

Photos of signage from across the state (VSTWP)



CONTRIBUTIONS AND FEEDBACK

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

Ivan Carter (VSTWP), Jennifer Johnston (MCL), John Searby (DEWLP)

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:

VSTWP Executive Officer
Phone: (03) 5366 0000
Email: info@serratedtussock.com

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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