Clean your machine! *A hitchhikers guide*

Sustainable Options Land Management

Pest plants can be a major threat to the Bay of Plenty region's farmland, wetlands, lakes and waterways. Small fragments of unwanted vegetation are easily able to spread by contaminated equipment and excavation machinery. Transportation or the movement of root, stem, seed and crown fragments propagate quickly once introduced and they can heavily impede on pasture and waterways. Many pest plant species outgrow native flora and fauna, are unpalatable to stock, and overcrowd and damage freshwater systems. Due to the nature of such species being out of origin, they therefore require regular and vigorous control methods.

Prevention is a useful tool in minimising the potential environmental damage caused through the spread of pest plants. Seed, root or crown fragments that are buried in soil and which may come into contact with earthmoving and excavating machinery have the potential to establish new sites of infestation, either in transit or once the vehicle has reached its destination(s).

Major Pest Plants of Concern

The following pest plants are examples of the types of vegetation that can easily be spread by machinery working in or around freshwater margins and/or drainage sites. Such species can have drastic adverse effects on the ecological balance of Rotorua's



lakes and margins. Learn to identify the following species and what you can do to minimise the spread of invasive pest plants:

Alligator Weed *Alternanthera philoxeroides*)



Forms dense mats of vegetation up to 2 m tall. It has a wide habitat range, capable of growing on saline and estuarine environments to relatively dry pastures. **Senegal Tea** *Gymnocoronsis spilanthoides*



Usually restricted to marshy soils and still or slow-flowing water, which allows the plant to grow up to 1.5 m tall and creates a floating mat, extending from the margins of the water body.



Yellow Flag Iris pseudacorus



A very leafy species which grows in clumps up to 1 m high, producing conspicuous yellow flowers in spring. Spread is by seed or by movement of the root system. Yellow flag can grow to form dense stands which exclude other desirable vegetation.

African Feather Grass

Pennisetum macrourum



A grass that forms in large clumps and has underground stems. The seed heads can grow to 2 m tall and it is a prolific spreader. African Feather Grass thrives in pastures, roadside, wasteland and urban areas. New colonies will arise from moved or broken root systems and form dense clumps which outcompete desired vegetation.

Asiatic Knotweed Fallopia japonica



A tall, upright, shrub-like plant that can grow rapidly to 3 m in height. Once established, Asiatic knotweed forms a deep rooting system which can be difficult to remove. Asiatic knotweed forms dense stands which crowds out and shades all other vegetation and displaces native flora and fauna.

What can be done?

- Learn to identify key pest plant species and what you can do to minimise the spread
- Visually inspect all machinery used on site for organic matter, even small soil samples may contain seed, root or crown fragments.
- Ensure all tyres, tracks, undersides, grills and filters, and other machinery or equipment that has been used around the lake edge, rivers, streams, wetlands and drainage sites are thoroughly cleaned before leaving the site, and prior to entering new environments.
- Contractors may establish weed management plans to minimise the spread of pest plants in the Bay of Plenty Region.
- If you are concerned about identification of a plant, or if you wish to report an infestation, notify Bay of Plenty Regional Council on 0800 884 880.



Bay of Plenty Regional Council

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