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Quad bikes have now been bought to access remote pest problems

A Note from our Project Manager

Since our last newsletter in November 2000, we've had a very busy time. The Review Report on our project was completed in December 2000, and the Cape York Regional Advisory Panel (CYRAP) considered its recommendations in January 2001. CYRAP's decision was to continue the Project and to support the Project staff and the Cape York Peninsula Pest Advisory Committee (CYPPAC) to work on aspects of the Project that needed improving.

The role, duties and functioning of CYPPAC was revised by its members at a workshop in Coen in April (see article p.1). A new independent CYPPAC Chair – Robyn Maxwell – has now been appointed and we wish her all the best in the role.

Project staff have focussed on improving communication between the Project and all interested CYP stakeholders, particularly with CYPPAC members. Over the coming year, our project will be working more closely with Indigenous communities on pest management planning and capacity building of community members in relation to on-ground pest management.

I would like to again thank all our staff and landholders who have worked hard to implement practical on-ground solutions to pest problems over the past 2 years. Our new challenge is to keep up the pace for our third year.

Year 3 of Funding Approved

Funding for the third year of the Cape York Weeds and Feral Animals Project (WAFAP) has now been approved by the Federal Minister for the Environment, Senator Robert Hill.

After an exhaustive review process by independent consultants, the achievements of the project were recognized and a total of \$1,314,610 allocated to continue our work over the next 12 months.

The new budget includes additional funding recommended by the Cape York Regional Advisory Panel (CYRAP) in response to the consultants' Review Report. These extra resources are for

- purchase of three quad bikes – one for each weed crew – to enable the crews to more efficiently and effectively access remote weed locations;
- increased resources for the Cape York Peninsula Pest Advisory Committee (CYPPAC) to assist this committee to undertake its substantial role (see below and page 2 for details); and
- additional staff to assist with communicating the Project's results to the community, report writing and technical advice.

To discuss any aspect of the Cape York Weeds and Feral Animals Project, you are invited to call the CYPPAC Chair, Robyn Maxwell on 40695 579, or the Project Manager, Alice Beilby on 40 695020.

CYPPAC – the community's voice in our project

The **Cape York Peninsula Pest Advisory Committee (CYPPAC)** was formed in 1999 as a forum for all landholders in CYP to set the priorities of the Weeds and Feral Animals Project. Representatives of all DOGIT communities, the broad community of Cook Shire and relevant Government agencies meet 3 to 4 times each year to discuss the Project and provide strategic direction to Project staff.

CYPPAC's key tasks:

- To encourage, assist and facilitate the development of Pest Management Plans throughout CYP with a view to having complementary and locally driven plans throughout CYP;
- To prioritise and provide direction for weed and feral animal management through the CYWAFAP. This includes:
- To review the draft and approve the final quarterly or 6 monthly work program/s for the CYWAFAP;
- To review the draft and approve the final yearly budget;
- To develop agreed Performance Indicators for the Project and evaluate the Project against these at every meeting;
- To inform and consult with constituents and to faithfully represent their views;
- To ensure the Project develops and maintains links with other relevant programs and projects;
- To identify and utilise opportunities to build the capacity (skills, knowledge and resources) of land managers to deal with weeds and feral animal management in the region;
- To encourage land owners and/or occupiers to fulfil their responsibilities in relation to weeds and feral animal management;
- To provide recommendations to appropriate levels of Government and the Rural Lands Protection Board on pest priorities and management needs in CYP;



In June 2001, Robyn Maxwell became the Chair of CYPAC

CYPAC members:

Chair: Robyn Maxwell

Northern Region: Paddy Shephard;
Debbie Gostelow

Eastern Region: Anne Wakefield;
Wilma Watkins

Western Region: Ann Raymond;
Bill Raymond

DOGIT Communities: George Ropeyam (Injinoo); Mark Hardy (Umagico); Ron Williams or Nick Curnow (Bamaga); Jonathan Corkatain (Aurukun); Peter Sciberras (Wujal Wujal); John Pritchard (Lockhart River); Vol Norris (Kowanyama); Hugh Edwards (Napranum); John Taylor (Pompuraaw); Lawrie Booth (Mapoon); Pedro Stephen (Torres); Jeffrey Aniba (Seisia).

State Government: John Clarkson (QPWS); Peter James (DNRM); Mark Peacock (QPWS); Paul Graham (Main Roads).

Cook Shire: Colin Innes; Helen Rutherford.

Additional CYPAC members needed as alternates for northern and eastern representatives

Expressions of Interest for two alternative representatives – one for each of the Northern and Eastern sub-regions of Cape York Peninsula (CYP) – are now being called.

Although there are currently two representatives for each of these sub-regions, occasionally either one or both of these members is unable to attend CYPAC meetings and would require the assistance of an alternative representative.

Landholders / land managers who are resident in either the northern or eastern regions of CYP and have an interest in the control of weeds and feral animals are invited to apply.

CYPAC meets four times per year at various centres around CYP, with teleconferences also undertaken as necessary. Sitting fees are payable for meetings, and accommodation, food and travel costs are met by the Cape York Weeds and Feral Animals Project.

For further information and to nominate as an alternate on the committee, please contact the Project Manager, WAFAP, PO Box 3, COOKTOWN QLD 4871 by close of business on Friday, August 24, 2001, phone 40 695020 or fax 40 696 997.

Abattoir Feasibility Study to go ahead

A game meat export approved slaughtering facility in North Queensland is one step closer to reality with funding arrangements almost in place to undertake a feasibility study. A pre-feasibility study in 1999-2000 looked at all other pre-feasibility studies that had been done in Cape York Peninsula and recommended that a full feasibility study be undertaken.

A preliminary application has been made to Invest Australia (a Commonwealth funding body) which is a partner with Austrade. The Department of

State Development has approved a preliminary application for \$10,000, Cook Shire Council has contributed \$10,000 and the WAFAP incentives program (with CYPAC support) has put \$5,000 towards the project.

The proposal has the support of 23 local governments on North Queensland.

It is expected that advertisements for consultants to undertake the study will be advertised in September.

Working with Indigenous Communities

WAFAP's Indigenous Community Development Officer, Clive Hendersen, has approached all DOGIT Community Councils and other indigenous communities in CYP over the last 18 months regarding the support they need to further develop their approach to weeds and feral animals. Community needs fall broadly into two areas: training (capacity building) and community-based planning.

Training

The WAFAP has been able to offer informal and formal training to indigenous communities.

During the year 2000, a joint venture between the Cook Shire Council, the Cape York Weeds and Feral Animals Project, the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service and Indigenous communities in the south-east of CYP was undertaken to provide on-the-job and course work training for 18 young indigenous people in weed and feral animal management. The training was very practical, done in the community and competency based.

Of the 18 trainees from Ang-Gnarra, Hopevale – Rimmerr, Gungarde and Wujal Wujal who started the program, 7 graduated with a Certificate 2 in Land Conservation and Management. The training package was delivered by the Australian College of Tropical Agriculture, and the on-the-job work experience was provided by staff of the WAFAP. Clive Hendersen, WAFAP's Indigenous Liaison Officer, mentored all the trainees throughout their training period.

One of the trainees was successful in obtaining a recently advertised job with the WAFAP – Damien Walker will now assist Russell Graham with weed management in the Cooktown area. Damien

attended all training sessions with the Australian College of Tropical Agriculture (370 hours).

It is hoped that similar training and on-the-job experience can be provided for interested young people in other communities in Cape York in 2001-2002. Councils on the West Coast, the Northern Peninsula Area and Lockhart River are invited to consider the benefits of this training for their communities, but are reminded that traineeships cannot be approved unless long-term employment opportunities for participants have been identified in the area.

Planning

Recently, CYPAC formed its Indigenous Pest Management Planning sub-committee. The functions of the committee are to:

- Review what planning has been done to date in the communities;
- Establish an acceptable process for the development of Pest Management Plans in indigenous communities;
- Re-engage communities on pest management, as necessary;
- Identify resource needs to develop local Pest Management Plans and where these might be sourced.

The Sub-Committee membership is Vol Norris (Kowanyama); John Pritchard (Lockhart River); a representative from NPA (to be discussed by NPA reps), Ron Billyard (Aurukun), Peter James (DNRM). Contact the sub-committee through the WAFAP's Cooktown Office.

Wayne Sycamore at herbicide distribution training



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Work Priorities for July – September, 2001

Weed Management

Eastern crew: Parkinsonia follow-up at Rutland Plains and Pormpuraaw; Lantana at Lilyvale; Rubbervine at Koolburra and Crystalvale Stations; Survey and control of Bellyache Bush on Palmer River; Chinese Apple and Water Hyacinth in Kowanyama and Pormpuraaw.

Northern Crew: Pond Apple at Chilli Beach, Newcastle Bay and Northern Peninsula Area; inspections and liaison with Lockhart River community regarding various weeds.

Eastern Crew: Pond Apple follow-up and survey; follow-up and survey of Bauhinia on Endeavour River; organization and implementation of the 1080 run.

Feral Animal Control

- Aerial 1080 bait runs for dingo control on participating properties on a Cape-wide coordinated basis – 3 runs in late September – early October
- Indigenous Community Training: Napranum, Mapoon, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Injinoo, Bamaga, Aurukun, Strathgordon;
- Follow-up blood sampling on sick pigs at Munburra, Jeannie River and Cape Melville;
- Pig control work and trapping on Lakefield NP subject to an action plan being submitted by National Parks in conjunction with the Traditional Owners;
- Aerial and ground survey and control work on feral pigs from Kowanyama to NPA;
- Pig trapping program through NPA lands coordinated with Community Councils and the Injinoo Land Trust.

CYPPAC decided at its meeting in July that the feral horse program will be put on hold until the feasibility study for the abattoir has been completed.

Other

- Incentive Program (available to the community – see article below)
- Mapping of priority areas for weeds and feral animals by the community (survey)
- Feasibility Study for Abattoir
- Newsletter
- Funding Application
- Major Report on project to date

Weed crew inspecting sicklepod at Lockhart River



We need your input on weeds and feral animal control priorities

Project staff and CYPPAC are keen to receive your input on priorities for on-ground works that could be assisted through the project over the coming year and beyond. We need your local knowledge and advice to ensure that the funding received has the maximum long-term impact on the pests of CYP.

The Project Manager has mailed out to many landholders a map of our region on which to mark high priority weeds and feral animal populations for control. We also ask landholders to describe the impact the pest is having on their land, and suggestions for control techniques best suited to their property. If you don't have a map and would like to let us know your pest priorities, please call our office on 40 695 020.

Your priorities will then be assessed by staff and external experts and advisors on a whole-of-cape basis. If you can get together with your neighbours and forward a combined set of priorities for your total area, this would be an advantage for you in the prioritization process.

Incentive Program assists community to address weeds and feral animal problems

Landholders in Cape York Peninsula can apply for financial assistance with herbicide, bullets and other services and equipment through the WAFAP Incentives Program. Around \$100,000 (almost 10%) of the project budget is set aside each year to directly assist the community in addressing its pest issues in a planned, co-ordinated and effective way.

To ensure that this help is given to landholders who are committed to long-term and strategic control of their pests, the WAFAP asks landholders to prepare:

- a Property Pest Management Plan (PPMP) identifying existing infestations of environmental and declared weeds and other pests on the property and a proposal for the control of the pests and rehabilitation of the land over a fixed period; and
- an Annual Pest Maintenance Program and log which is upgraded at the completion of each year of control works.

Issues that need to be addressed in the preparation of the plans are;

- Location of existing infestations of the pests in 3 categories – isolated, scattered and dense
- Type of control intended for each infestation
- Support required under the incentive program
- Time required to complete the job
- Alternative methods of control – what else can be done to address the problem
- Seasonal weather constraints
- Co-operative work with neighbours on boundaries

To date, a total of \$76,441.68 in incentives have been provided to 70 different landholders over 2 years. These have included: herbicide; bullets; pig trap materials, subsidized aerial baiting programs and a contribution to the feasibility study for a game meat abattoir.

\$131,557.62 is currently still available in the budget for incentives, with a further \$104,000 when this year's funding is made available.



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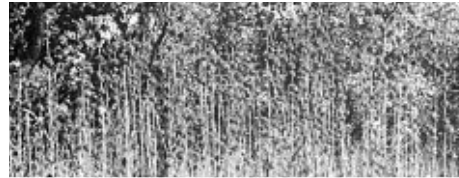


WEEDS OF CAPE YORK PENINSULA – A GUIDE TO IDENTIFICATION

The Cape York Weeds and Feral Animal Project, in collaboration with the Department of Natural Resources and Mines, has produced the first identification guide to around 40 of our region's most problematic weeds. The guide will be launched and distributed free of charge to Landholders in October this year, as part of Weedbuster Week activities.

The guide will contain colour photographs of the weeds and a written description of each, information about the habitat in which they are likely to be found, and the weeds' means of spread, flowering time and growth form. All this is in an easy-to-use format with water resistant pages for maximum field use.

Once landholders have correctly identified the suite of weeds on their property, information on control techniques can be obtained by contacting the WAFAP office in Cooktown or the Department of Natural Resources and Mines.



Lion's Tail (Leonotis Netepifolia)



Elephant Creeper (Argyrea nervosa)

Our Project and Project Staff

The Cape York Weeds and Feral Animals Project currently employs 11 people. The following diagram shows our staff reporting relationships, as well as our relationship to our funding organization – the Cape York Natural Heritage Trust, and Government Ministers.

Each edition of our newsletter will feature a different staff member. This edition is our Community Development Officer, Clive Henderson.

Clive grew up and went to school in Cooktown. He always had an interest in natural resource management and completed a TAFE Community Rangers course in 1995. Clive worked as a ranger



Clive Henderson.

for the Quinkan Reserve Trust from 1982-88, and had various temporary work with National Parks, Marine Parks and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. Before taking up his position with the WAFAP, Clive managed GreenCorps projects in Cooktown for 18 months

Key roles in WAFAP

- Inform indigenous communities of CYP about the WAFAP
- Develop an awareness of weeds and feral animal issues in communities
- Assist communities to become involved in the project
- Take information back from the communities to the project manager

Contact for Clive:
Cooktown WAFAP Office on
Phone 40 695 020 and Fax 40 695 997

