



MACQUARIE VALLEY WEEDS COMMITTEE INC.  
*Established 8<sup>th</sup> August 1978*

CHAIRMAN  
 Roger Smith  
 Phone: 02 6393 8025  
 Mobile: 0419 011 002

SENIOR VICE CHAIRMAN  
 Andrew Cosier  
 Phone: 02 6840 1758  
 Mobile: 0429 207 791

JUNIOR VICE CHAIRMAN  
 Rebecca Balmer  
 Phone: 02 6840 1759

SECRETARY  
 Melissa Brennan  
 Phone: 02 6393 8057

Minutes of General Meeting 157  
 ANFD - Orange  
 Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2019

Meeting commenced at 10.00am

Present

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Robyn Richardson	NSW DPI
Guy Marchant	Narromine Shire Council
Andrew Cole	Orange City Council
Laurie Thompson	Lachlan Shire Council
Stephen Johnson	NSW DPI
Chris Jackson	Upper Macquarie County Council
Andrea Fletcher	Castlereagh Macquarie County Council
Tina Smart	Forbes Shire Council
Matt Anderton	Mid-Western Regional Council
Sean Costigan	Mid-Western Regional Council
Roger Smith	Chairman
Melissa Brennan	Secretary
Marita Sydes	Central Tablelands LLS
Rebecca Balmer	Dubbo Regional Council
Andrew Cosier	Dubbo Regional Council
Samantha Street	Forbes Shire Council
Brian Bonello	Bogan Shire Council
Kevin Nelligan	Cowra Shire Council
Neil Boyd	Cabonne Shire Council
Mitch Townsend	Cabonne Shire Council
Glenn Neyland	Bland Shire Council-Sec. Lachlan Valley
Karen Raymond	Bland Shire Council
Angie Kelly	Central West LLS
Thomas Pickering	Hilltops Council

Tim Last	Cootamundra Shire Council
James Elliot	Cootamundra Shire Council
Glenn Sloane	Parkes Shire Council
Kane Davison	Parkes Shire Council
Michael Smith	Narromine Shire Council

The Chairman asked for 1 minutes silence for Don Mackenzie.

The Chairman welcomed everyone to Orange and welcome to Lachlan Valley Committee members for our combined Macquarie Valley and Lachlan Valley meeting today and thanked those that had travelled for today's meeting.

The Chairman called for apologies.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Josh Higgs	Crown Land
Kerinne Harvey	DPI NSW
Daniel Long	Blue Mountains City Council
Bryson Rees	Dubbo Regional Council
Andy McKinnon	Western LLS
Jacky Wiblin	Crown Land
Cathy Ellison	Bogan Shire Council
Craig Bennett	Associate member
Tony Payne	Bogan Shire Council
Jodie Lawler	Central West LLS
Cathy Black	Bogan Shire Council
Andrew Francis	Parkes Shire Council
Erlina Compton	Western LLS
Colleen Farrow	Central Tablelands LLS
Melissa Gunn	Cobar Shire Council
Tim Nalder	Central Tablelands LLS
Andrew McConnachie	DPI NSW
Russell Tiffen	Bourke Shire Council
Kellie Frost	Weddin Shire Council
Brooke Kirkman	Central West LLS
Archie Harding	Narromine Shire Council
George Hammond	Life member
John Ryan	Forbes Shire Council
Jay Stephenson	Associate member
Matt Bailey	Parkes Shire Council
Grahame McCubbin	Bland Shire Council
Rob Christian	Orange City Council
Des Mackey	Dubbo Regional Council
Matt Croft	Dubbo Regional Council
Chris Cannard	Cowra Shire Council
Neil Wright	Forbes Shire Council
Michael Michelmore	DPI NSW

*Moved Guy Marchant*

*Seconded Brian Bonello*

*Carried*

**Confirmation of previous meeting minutes from MVWC meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2019 at Wellington**

Moved Matt Anderton

Seconded Kane Davison

Carried

**Confirmation of previous meeting minutes from LVWC meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> July 2019 at Molong**

Moved Kane Davison

Seconded Neil Boyd

Carried

**Business arising from previous meeting held at Wellington on 13<sup>th</sup> August 2019**

There was none

**Chairman's report from Macquarie Valley**

As you all would have heard by now Don Mackenzie passed away on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October at Taree. Don was a life member of the MVWC. Over the years Don contributed immensely to weed management at a local, regional, state and federal level. He was involved with many committees and taskforces especially when he was the weeds officer at Bourke. In fact Don put Bourke and the north-west region of NSW on the map as far as weeds go. He also had stints at Brewarrina and Moree. During this time he forged a solid working relationship with NSW DPI especially with the likes of Peter Gray, Stephen Johnson, Bob Trounce and Richard Carter and I'm sure many others. Don was also heavily involved in the now nationally recognised Education and Training Program for weeds officers and was a member of the initial pilot program for that training through the Macquarie Valley Weeds Advisory Committee and Tocal College. He was also the winner of the inaugural Stephenson Award for his contribution to weed management throughout NSW. I have written to NSW DPI asking them to consider having the new biocontrol breeding facility being constructed at Lightning Ridge named after Don Mackenzie. This region is where Don undertook the majority of his work and if this were to occur would leave a legacy to Don for years to come. Andrew Cosier, Bryson Rees, Hutcho and myself attended Don's funeral. Weedos from Moree were also there as well as NSW DPI.

Richard Carter also passed away earlier this month. Richard was the program leader for weeds in NSW for 15 or so years. He transformed the way weeds were managed in NSW by introducing weed plans, backing the MVWAC's Training and Education Program and developing the WAP. In 2013 he left NSW DPI and joined the Central Tablelands LLS.

**NSW Weeds Conference:** The NSW weeds conference was held recently in Newcastle with one of our members, Andy Fletcher, receiving the Buerckner Award for outstanding contribution to the on-ground control of weeds in NSW. This carries on from her receiving the Tom Knowles Award last year. Another one of our weeds officers, Andrew Cole, was one of 6 nominations for the Stephenson Award for outstanding contribution to planning and coordinating weed management programs in NSW. This award was eventually taken out by David Pomery. Well done to both Andys.

Further to the weeds conference I personally feel the conferences are being ambushed by academics, (through no fault of their own), and salesmen. I strongly feel we need to get back to basics and allow weedos to tell their stories from inside their own patch to their peers. Getting this to happen may need some more persuasion.

**Mental Health First Aid:** The Mental Health First Aid Training was recently held in Dubbo with 24 members attending the training. From all reports the training was well presented and well received. Would anyone like to comment on the training?

**Television Campaign:** This year's television campaign is ongoing with another month to go. Has anyone received feedback from the campaign to date or viewed the campaign during some of the more popular programs.

**WAP Funding:** With the finalisation of WAP 15/20 fast approaching does anyone have concerns their LCA may not be able to spend all the funds allocated to program due to the severe drought conditions. If this is the case I would encourage you to liaise with your respective LLS to explain the situation. Generally funds are not permitted to be rolled over from one WAP to another but the present drought situation is unprecedented and the circumstances extenuating so some options may be forthcoming.

**Weeds Trailer and Drone:** The Macquarie Valley has some great resources available for members to utilise in the weeds trailer and drone so please make use of these items. Drones are becoming more widely used and just recently the Macquarie Valley drone was used to do weed mapping at Broken Hill with the pilot being Andrew Cole. At the February meeting planned for Grenfell we have arranged for a drone operator from Orange to give a demo with a drone capable of carrying 20 kilograms. It has a 2 metre span.

**Biocontrol Taskforce Meeting:** Troy Brown, from NSW DPI, has informed me of the upcoming NSW Weed Biocontrol Taskforce biannual meeting to be held on the 14th November 2019 between 9:30am-3:30pm at the Orange Agricultural Institute, 1447 Forest Rd, Orange in the Carcoar Room. He has extended an invitation to all MVWC members to attend. I would encourage members to attend to see what's in the pipeline as far as biocontrol programs go. With the current drought conditions somewhat restricting our general practices it may be an ideal opportunity to catch up with the Biocontrol Taskforce. Troy's contact is 0437 543 818 or [troy.brown@dpi.nsw.gov.au](mailto:troy.brown@dpi.nsw.gov.au).

**May 2020 Meeting:** At this stage we are contemplating holding the May 2020 meeting at Broken Hill where the MVWC has never held a meeting. It is a long haul out to Broken Hill so I think the meeting needs to be complimented by some form of training/workshop. I would like committee members to start thinking about training and what they see would be worthwhile. As mentioned earlier I would like to see more weeds officers present at conferences perhaps in pairs to take some of the anxiety away. Power point presentations are another tool to use when presenting. Maybe the latter could be the training focus.

I would like to thank the committee for your continued support throughout 2019. The MVWC has had a very good year with some great goals kicked. Some valuable

training has been provided and relevant workshops conducted. Meetings have been held in Forbes, Lightning Ridge, and Wellington and at the ANFD so thanks goes to Tina, Andy, Andrew and Beck and Melissa. Well done all. Also thanks to Mel for keeping me organised.

### **Chairmans Report from Lachlan Valley**

**Roundup debate:** Grahame McCubbin spoke about the Roundup/Glyphosate debate and how Bland Shire Council is trialling Glyphosate alternatives for town work, including “Slasher” organic herbicide.

**RMS-Freeway roadside barriers:** Kevin Nelligan spoke about the difficulties and safety concerns of carrying out weed control along freeways. Control is difficult in the area between roadside guard rail fences and landholders’ boundary fences. Operating a spray vehicle can be a hazard as there may not be sufficient room to stay clear of traffic and the fence does not allow a safe escape route. Control may become more reliant on chemicals instead of slashing etc. because of safety, however there is also concern of a control vehicle breaking down and being too close to traffic. There was also a discussion on appropriate TCP’s and signage when working along RMS roads. Kane Davison suggested that some weed areas may be accessed safer using longer spray hoses. James Elliot commented on a mandatory 3m exclusion zone from the fogline needing to be adhered to. James also spoke about RMS obligations for weed control being on the DPI/Weedwise site.

**Sticky Nightshade:** Roger Smith said that Sticky Nightshade had been put through a weed risk assessment and will be put on a weeds list.

**Tony Cook – DPI:** Tony spoke about glyphosate resistance and its history. Ryegrass resistance was detected around 1990, and since then resistance has also been detected in Fleabane, Windmill Grass and Barnyard Grass. Tony said that some other useful chemicals are Bromacil and Imazapyr for Fleabane and Sow Thistle, Terrain for fence lines and Group G herbicides also useful for certain situations. There are 3 species in Australia. It was introduced in the 1940s and used for soil stabilization. It has now become an agricultural and environmental weed of concern and can seed any time of the year. Tony said that there is now bio-control work on Lovegrass.

**Don Lawrence Award:** The Don Lawrence Award for 2019 was presented to Kevin Nelligan for his outstanding work and commitment to the Weeds industry.

### **Correspondence**

*The Chairman read through the incoming and outgoing correspondence.*

The Chairman noted that there were many emails to go through but all of them have been circulated.

The Chairman read out a condolence card from Megan Power regarding Don Mackenzie.

The Chairman called for any questions.

There were none.

### **Financial report for Macquarie Valley**

The Chairman spoke about the WAP reporting and mentioned that Macquarie Valley are doing well at the moment with funds.

The Chairman confirmed that the committee is still happy to contribute money towards training that is going to be beneficial for committee members.

The Chairman called for any questions.  
There were none.

*Moved Sean Costigan  
Seconded Andrea Fletcher  
Carried*

### **Financial Report for Lachlan Valley**

There was no financial report for Lachlan due to John Ryan being unwell.

### **Presentation on Bio-Herbicide by Stephen Johnson (DPI)**

Weeds costs at least \$5 billion annually to Australia.

One of the solutions to the weed problem is biological control.

NSW DPI is developing a biological herbicide for Bathurst Burr (*Xanthium spinosum*).

Australia has had good success with biological control: perhaps the most notable memorable has been the control of common pest pear (*Opuntia stricta*) by the *Cactoblastis* caterpillars.

At its height, the common prickly pear covered an area in eastern Australia about the size of England, and an area about half the size of Wales was being added to that each year.

That imposed huge costs on primary production, the environment and the community but after the introduction of the biological control, things were turned around.

The need then, and now, was for a safe and effective biological control agent.

The biological herbicide NSW DPI has developed is another type of biological control but it uses a naturally occurring pathogen (*Colletotrichum* species (a fungus) to cause disease to get rid of (kill) Bathurst burr.

Bathurst burr is a major weed problem. It competes for soil water and nutrients, its burrs tangle wool and cotton, while its spines can cause injury.

I estimated that it costs well over US\$390 million per year in yield losses in just one industry (cotton) each year, and that was just in the top 10 cotton exporting nations.

It is a weed in 82 countries and not just those that rely on primary industry exports like Australia, New Zealand, the USA and South Africa.

It is a weed in developed and developing countries: right through western and eastern Europe, to the Ukraine and Russia, India and China, not to mention Brazil and Mexico, and parts of southern Africa.

It is difficult to control when it is dry and not actively growing.

It is also an important environmental weed.

Many people, including weed officers, want to make sure that the areas where they, and/or their families or their pets are, have not been sprayed with chemicals that could harm them.

Unfortunately, that is the way that most Bathurst burr is controlled at the moment and these chemicals can also affect off-target plants like cotton, and clovers and medics in pastures.

Bathurst Burr Bioherbicide is a solution to all these issues.

It has been far less expensive to develop and to apply than any chemical alternatives (herbicides) around.

It is at least as effective and comparable in killing burr as commonly used herbicides and that as a naturally occurring product no people or animals should be harmed when we spray it in the field.

The "technology" we have introduced into the bioherbicide means that we do not have to rely on dew or rainfall to cause disease either.

This "technology", with the disease causing pathogen, turns these healthy plants into dead plants in two weeks.

**THIS HAS BEEN A GLOBAL LIMITATION ON THE USE OF BIOPESTICIDES TO DATE.**

The potential to put this technology into other biopesticides is enormous.

Because not only am I a scientist but I am also a Father and I want to make sure that kids like these are safe when they go to the playground or where-ever they are playing.

But to get to that point we had to apply a little age and a lot of wisdom (from Professor Bruce Auld and Mrs Heather Smith), which, when you add me to it is well over 90 years' worth.

To achieve these world firsts: that is a sprayable biological herbicide for Bathurst burr; and the technology that we can put in a range of other biopesticides to help them work.

In summary, the Bathurst Burr Bioherbicide is:

- 100% effective;
- environmentally safe; and
- climate stable - you can spray it without rain or dew and it works;
- it is naturally occurring; and
- we are currently in the process of seeking a commercial partner to bring the product to market; and also
- to place the "technology" in a whole lot of other biopesticides.

Kevin Nelligan asked a question about if there was going to be more research in the future for Serrated Tussock.

The Chairman from Macquarie Valley asked what the timeline is for this control agent to be on the ground?

Andrew Cosier asked if there was only 1 application each summer and will it stay around till the next application. Stephen Johnson mentioned that it is best to apply after each irrigation or rainfall.

### **MVWC Constitution Update**

The Senior Vice Chairman gave an update on the constitution and suggested that we change a point in the constitution. He has suggested that we change this to enable more delegates/members to attend the meetings and to enable more voting rights.

He has put forward to change:

#### **Old**

3.2 Eligible Local Control Authorities will be allowed three (3) delegates with at least one delegate being a Weeds Officer.

#### **New**

3.2 Eligible Local Control Authorities will be allowed a **maximum of six (6) delegates with a minimum of three (3) being Weeds Officers. Where LCA's have three (3) or less delegates then at least one must be a Weeds Officer**

The outcome of this is that if you have 3 delegates then you are entitled to 3 votes but if you have 6 delegates within your organisation then you are only entitled to 3 votes.

This will be discussed more amongst the committee and prior to the next AGM.

### **Training**

The Chairman asked everyone what training they would like to do as a committee.

Andrea Fletcher suggested power point and public speaking training and Glenn Neyland mentioned that public speaking in pairs takes the pressure off.

Matt Anderton suggested that the public speaking aspect side of it would be good.

Sean Costigan spoke about different personalities within the committees and that it would be a good idea.

The Chairman would like more members to get up and present at conferences. It was suggested that we arrange for a professional public speaker to come to our meeting in Broken Hill in May.

Kane Davison suggested a 4x4 and recovery training course– maybe include quad bikes in the training. It was suggested that we use Tocal for the training.

### **Dept of Primary Industries update**

Robyn Richardson mentioned that DPI NSW still hasn't received the amount of WAP funding figures for 2019/2020. It is currently sitting with the minister. DPI NSW are trying to find funding elsewhere through drought allocation. Robyn mentioned for everyone to keep putting in the BIS data and keep engaging with the landholders and talking to them and just about letting them know what to look for when the drought does break. Syd Lisle is currently doing a desktop audit at the moment so you need to keep putting the dots on the map.

Robyn advised that the revised WAP guidelines for 2025 have gone out so it would be good if everyone reads through these and this will refresh you on what we are doing.

### **Delegate Reports**

Angie Kelly from Central West LLS mentioned that it has been very dry and they have been burr spraying.

Andrew Cosier and Rebecca Balmer from Dubbo Regional Council said they gave up on boxthorn about 2 or 3 months ago, they have been talking to landowners about when the drought breaks.

Andrea Fletcher from Castlereagh Macquarie said she hasn't been doing much spraying, Hudson Pear going well and the agents are working well.

Matt Anderton from Mid-Western Regional Council said that there is not a lot growing, they are keeping an eye on the weather as they are focusing on St John's Wort. Matt mentioned that they have put on another weeds officer Breanna Davis who will be starting on 11 November and they have a lady coming soon to do Community based socials marketing programs for 3 days a week. They have been focusing a lot on education.

Sean Costigan said he was doing some inspections on soft spots like National Parks, State Forests, small house blocks, council land and crown land. Hopefully if they have some rain they will start spraying.

Mitch Townsend from Cabonne Council has been cleaning up around the cemetery's and have some inspections lined up soon.

Neil Boyd has been working on Century plant, African Lovegrass and Privet around Molong. They will be doing some inspections in the eastern area.

Andrew Cole from Orange City Council found some Sagittaria in Browns Creek.

Tina Smart from Forbes Shire Council has found the odd patch of boxthorn, and is keeping an eye on TSR's and roadsides.

Samantha Street just completed a recognizing grasses workshop over the last 2 days. She has been spraying Boxthorn and there is an infestation of Green Cestrum in Forbes.

Tim Last and James Elliot from Cootamundra Shire Council have been undertaking inspections due to a better season in their area. They have been spraying some Tiger Pear around the Temora area.

Tom Pickering from Hilltops Council is chasing Serrated Tussock and Chilean needle grass. Tom mentioned that this is in full seed at the moment.

Chris Jackson from Upper Macquarie is focusing on absentees and small blocks, he will start on roadsides in November. They have issued 4 PIN notices, 2 have been paid so far and the other 2 they are waiting to hear from State Debt recovery.

Marita Sydes from Central Tablelands LLS is working on Sticky Nightshade and getting that up into our regional plan so that's out for comment for October. It will be put out to the LLS board in their November meeting and once adopted Robyn Richardson will be informed and it will go onto Weed wise. She also said they had a meeting this week for Serrated Tussock and at the moment they have a few of the Councils on board for testing of resistance in the field.

Karen Raymond from Bland Shire Council finished shoulder spraying and has started spraying St John's Wort.

Kane Davison from Parkes Shire Council mentioned that he had dug out 2 tonnes of prickly pear over last 2 months. They mentioned that they are having issues with their tablets and their roam program.

Glenn Sloane said that they had been doing a lot of residential property inspections.

Laurie Thompson from Lachlan Shire Council finished doing the red post areas and will start doing property inspections around the river for weeds.

Kevin Nelligan from Cowra Shire Council had a good blitz on Frogbit and broke into 4 zones, covering about 80% of the area. They will try again in a couple of weeks' time and clear up the rest of it. Kevin mentioned the dangers of buying plants off the internet. He also mentioned that Bridal Creeper is spreading a lot.

### **New Weed Incursion**

An incursion of Sagittaria was found in Cabonne.

There has been a siting of Mexican Poppy around Orange and Nyngan areas.

### **Revamping of MVWC and LVWC weeds trailer**

It was suggested to have pin boards that are specific for an area to use in the trailers. We are looking into quotes to have these spruced up.

Melissa to send an email out asking what weed species everyone would like for the doors.

We need to be able to change the weeds for each area and we should be using magnetic boards and not to use blu tac in the future.

*Moved Guy Marchant*

*Seconded Laurie Thompson*

*Carried*

### **Discussion on contributing to Drought Angels**

It was discussed that Macquarie Valley will donate \$1500 to Drought Angels and Lachlan Valley can look into matching Macquarie Valley's donation.

*Moved Guy Marchant*

*Seconded Laurie Thompson*

*Carried*

Kevin Nelligan would like to move a motion that if Lachlan Valley have the funds they will match Macquarie Valley's donation of \$1500 to Drought Angels.

*Moved Kevin Nelligan*

*Seconded Karen Raymond*

*Carried*

### **Weeds Advertising**

It was discussed that the Weeds TV ad campaign is working quite well and is due to finish at the end of November.

### **General Business**

#### **Financial assistance for host councils.**

Brian Bonello suggested putting money forward from MVWC to help out host councils with food/catering or other expenses to do with Macquarie Valley meetings so there isn't a huge burden on the host council.

Guy Marchant suggested that the host Council can ask Macquarie Valley if they need assistance.

*Moved Guy Marchant*

*Seconded Andrew Cosier*

*Carried*

### **Tributes to Don Mackenzie**

Andrea Fletcher would like some ideas for Don's plaque and name suggestions for the building in Lightning Ridge.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting which is the February General Meeting will be held in Grenfell on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020. It will be hosted by Weddin Shire Council. The venue will be advised closer to the date.

The meeting closed at 12.30pm.