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10th
Nov
2016

Stopping the spread of invasive Pyp grass

Sections of Guilderton's primary dune system are currently being degraded by infestations of Pyp Grass (*Ehrharta villosa*) and the biodiversity of surrounding vegetation is being undermined as a result of the spread of this aggressive invasive weed. In response to this threat Moore Catchment Council commissioned a survey of the Pyp grass extent in Guilderton and management actions. The report was presented and discussed at a community workshop held in Guilderton on the 7th November.

Rachel Walmsley MCC's NRM Officer said "Pyp Grass was introduced into Australia for use in dune stabilisation but unfortunately it is now destroying vast hectares of native vegetation by smothering and out-competing the dune plants. It appeared in Guilderton more than 30 years ago and now covers nearly 13ha between the river and the lighthouse which is extensive compared to other coastal towns in the region. It has a fast-growing rhizome system and each plant can spread up to 9 metres per year."

Western Botanical was commissioned to produce the management report, and project manager Martin took the group through the report and the areas for priority. Rachel said "Lengthy discussions with the community workshop attendees resulted in the priority areas being rejigged, which demonstrates that this consultation was an essential part of producing this report. Estimates put the future herbicide control works at around \$90,000 which shows just how extensive it is and how difficult it is to control." The next step to obtain some funds to start the Pyp grass control works which will takes at least 3 years to kill off.

The group then visited some of the priority areas to view the Pyp grass infestations. Everyone agreed that the control works need to start soon before more good quality native dune vegetation is damaged. Pyp control projects at Jurien Bay and Cervantes show that it can be overcome and dunes restored long term.

Thanks to Northern Agricultural Catchments Council through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program for funding this project.



Pyp Grass smothered native vegetation

Pyp grass's fast-growing rhizome system

Linda holds up one stem of Pyp



Finalist in the 2014 CSBP Environmental Awards – Western Australian Regional Achievement and Community Awards
Finalist in the 2015 Fairfax Media Community Group Award Finalists – Western Australian Landcare Awards
Finalist in the 2015 LandCorp Sustainability Award - Western Australian Regional Achievement and Community Awards
Semi-Finalist in the 2016 LandCorp Sustainability Award - Western Australian Regional Achievement and Community Awards

The Moore Catchment Council promotes Natural Resource Management in the Moore River Catchment