

Media Release

The Hon Ros Spence MP
Minister for Agriculture
Minister for Community Sport
Minister for Carers and Volunteers



Monday, 1 July 2024

PARTNERING WITH COMMUNITY TO MANAGE PESTS AND WEEDS

Efforts to support long-term management of rabbits, blackberries, serrated tussock and gorse across Victoria have been bolstered with support from the Allan Labor Government to four community pest management groups.

Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence has announced five Partnerships Against Pests grants to support projects totalling \$250,000 across four Groups to tackle pests and weeds infesting the Victorian landscapes and waterways.

The four community pest management groups that received funding are the Victorian Rabbit Action Network, Victorian Blackberry Taskforce, Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party and Victorian Gorse Taskforce.

The cost of managing established weeds and pest animals for landowners across the state is estimated at \$869 million each year.

Established weeds and pest animals damage our landscapes and waterways, cause substantial production losses, jeopardise international market access and damage culturally sensitive sites of First Nations people.

The Partnerships Against Pests program is aimed at expanding collaborative partnerships for the long-term management of established weeds and pest animals in Victoria. It focuses on reducing the impacts of established weeds and pests through local action to achieve sustainable, long term, whole-of-landscape changes.

Since its launch in 2023, the Partnerships Against Pests program has delivered grants totalling \$690,000 for projects that support industry and community-led actions to target established pests and weeds.

This second round of funding will be used for projects that build capacity, raise awareness and encourage active management of established invasive species across the state.

The Victorian Gorse Taskforce and the Victorian Serrated Tussock Working Party will use their \$85,000 grant to establish communities of practice with members across Victoria.

Members will develop expertise in weed identification and best-practice management so they can then act as ambassadors in their own communities.

The Partnerships Against Pests program is funded through the Government's Backing Victoria's Producers initiative, which will deliver \$5 million over four years to support community-led action to manage established weeds and pest animals in Victoria.

For more information visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity.

Quotes Attributable to Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence

"Community led action is critical in the fight against weeds and pests, using local and innovative knowledge to implement initiatives that work best for them and their priorities."

"We're supporting our vibrant ecosystem by backing sustainable, long-term solutions to established weeds and pest animals management to prevent damage to our landscapes, waterways and agriculture industry."

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