

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP
Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Ports and Freight
Minister for Roads and Road Safety



Monday, 8 July 2024

REDUCING FIRE RISK ALONG RURAL ROADS IN TIME FOR SUMMER

The Allan Labor Government is supporting rural and regional councils to reduce roadside weeds and prepare for the upcoming fire season.

This year, 45 councils across Victoria will receive up to \$85,000 each through the Labor Government's *Roadside Weeds and Pests*.

Rural roadsides can provide a breeding ground for harmful weeds and pests and this funding allows councils to implement control measures that prevent their spread.

The funding will assist councils with a range of activities along their rural roadsides, including treating and preventing blackberry, boxthorn and serrated tussock weeds, as well as managing rabbit populations.

Local Government Victoria and Agriculture Victoria work closely with local councils to ensure plans to tackle weeds and pests are tailored to their local area.

Weeds and pests cost the Victorian economy over \$900 million each year. Invasive plant and animal species threaten native biodiversity, can have a serious negative impact on agricultural production, and contribute to the spread of fires.

Since 2017, the Labor Government has invested more than \$22 million to help councils manage municipal rural roadsides, protecting Victoria's native biodiversity and reducing fire risk.

More information on the Roadside Weeds and Pests Program can be found at localgovernment.vic.gov.au/funding-programs.

Quote attributable to Minister for Local Government Melissa Horne

"Reducing roadside weeds and pests is vital for protecting lives and properties in the lead up to the fire season, which is why we're helping councils to manage invasive plant and animal species."