

# Pest Plant and Animal Control Policy



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Record number	D21/16507
Responsible Manager	Manager Parks
Other key internal stakeholders	Director Assets and Environment Manager Recreation, Leisure & Community Safety
Last reviewed	27 April 2021
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## 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to state Council's position in regard to the management of pest plants and animals, insects and other invertebrates. The existence of this policy will ensure the effective monitoring and management of pest plants, animals, insects and other invertebrates within the City of Tea Tree Gully.

Our landscapes underpin our community, our economy, our wellbeing and our way of life, which is why we all have a responsibility to protect and manage our state's landscapes for the enjoyment of all South Australians.

## 2. POLICY

From July 1 2020, the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* replaced the *Natural Resources Management Act 2004*, as the key framework for managing the state's land, water, pest plants and animals, and biodiversity across the state.

The department works in partnership with the eight new regional Landscape South Australian boards, responsible for administering the new Act. A new entity Green Adelaide will also bring an integrated approach to managing Adelaide's urban environment.

A key priority of landscape boards is to support local communities and landowners to be directly responsible for sustainably managing their region's landscapes with an emphasis on land and water management, pest animal and plant control, and biodiversity. This includes providing greater funding and partnership opportunities with local community organisations to deliver on ground works and projects.

### 2.1 Pest Plants

Council recognises that pest plants (including declared pest plants and targeted pest plants) have over time invaded parts of the City. The extent to which they have spread and become significantly established has been to the detriment of ecosystems, water quality, local native flora and fauna or creek alignments.

Council will monitor and control pest plants on land under its care and control in order to meet its obligations relating to natural resources management under the Landscapes South Australia Act 2019, Department of Environment and Water, Draft Regional Landscape Plan 2021-26 and No Species Loss – A Nature Conservation Strategy for South Australia 2007-2016. Implementation of the policy including the control of pest plants and the rehabilitation of sites will occur in line with budget and resource allocations.

A list of Pest Plants is available at

[https://pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/weeds\\_and\\_pest\\_animals/weeds\\_in\\_sa](https://pir.sa.gov.au/biosecurity/weeds_and_pest_animals/weeds_in_sa).

A pest plant will be managed when its location or population presents an unacceptable risk to human cohabitation, assets or the environment. The risk will influence the recommended management methods required in each instance. Management methods include the following:

1. **Alert** – aims to prevent the species arriving and establishing in the area
2. **Eradicate from region** – aims to remove the pest species from the region
3. **Destroy Infestations** – aims to significantly reduce the extent of the pest species in the region
4. **Contain Spread** – aims to prevent the ongoing spread of the species in the region
5. **Protect Sites** – aims to prevent spread of the pest species to key sites/assets of high economic, environmental or social value
6. **Manage Pest Population** – aims to reduce the overall economic, environmental and/or social impacts of the pest species by targeted management
7. **Manage Sites** – aims to maintain the overall economic, environmental and/or social value of key sites/assets through improved general pest management
8. **Monitor** – aims to detect any significant changes in the pest risk including increases or decreases in pest density and subsequent impacts on agricultural productivity, biodiversity assets and public safety

The *Landscapes South Australia Act 2019* and when adopted the Department of Environment and Water Draft Regional Landscape Plan 2021-26 will have more specific and detailed management requirements for each specific declared weed and their locations.

The targeted pests within the Pest Plants listing on the PIRSA website may change over time as existing native or exotic plant species become problematic, new plant species are introduced into the area, or current control methods become ineffective. These will be managed and or added to this policy when necessary.

## 2.2 Site Rehabilitation

It is accepted that successful site rehabilitation is a key element in the management of pest plants. To ensure that the rehabilitation of pest plant infested sites is carried out as effectively as possible the following key criteria will be implemented:

1. Where sites are heavily infested with pest plants and/or control activities require an appreciation of community sensitivities, local residents will be notified of the proposed pest plant removal and informed of the reason for the works
2. Ongoing follow-up pest plant control of the site will be carried out to manage any regrowth and re-infestations of pest plants managed using effective and appropriate practices meeting industry best practices of the time.
3. Revegetation of controlled areas will be undertaken using local native plant species whenever possible either through natural regeneration or planting to provide habitat for local native fauna and increased amenity value. This creates competition to pest plant species which enhances management efforts.
4. New or developing pest plant management and revegetation techniques will be evaluated and costs/benefits assessed for each individual site.

In the instance where any planned works leads to community notification, Elected Members will be informed prior to works commencing. Public consultation will be undertaken as per the requirements of the Community Engagement (Public Consultation) Policy when required.

## 2.3 Pest Animals

Council recognises that pest animals (including declared pest animals and targeted pest animals, insects and other invertebrates) have over time invaded parts of the City. The extent to which they have spread and become significantly established may present an unacceptable risk to primary industries, human cohabitation, assets or the environment.

Council will monitor and control pest animals on land under its care and control in order to meet its obligations relating to natural resources management *under the Landscapes South Australia Act 2019* and Department of Environment and Water Draft Regional Landscape Plan 2021-26 and the No Species Loss – A Nature Conservation Strategy for South Australia 2007-2016.

Implementation of the policy including the control of pest animals and the rehabilitation of sites will occur in line with budget and resource allocations.

## 2.4 Relevant Declared Pest Animals in South Australia

These pests will be managed when necessary in accordance with the *Landscapes South Australia Act 2019* and the Department of Environment and Water Draft Regional Landscape Plan 2021-26.

- a. Feral deer
- b. Feral foxes
- c. Feral goats
- d. Wild dogs and dingoes
- e. Rabbits.

## 2.5 Targeted Pest Animals

There is no obligation for Council to manage Targeted Pest Animals as they are not declared pests under the *Landscapes South Australia Act 2019*. Animals that may cause a nuisance or hazard are managed under the Order Making Policy.

## 2.6 Rats

Rats - Council will manage rats on Council land and will investigate concerns of untidy private properties (including tall grass) that may be providing food and harbourage for rats. It is a legal requirement that owners and occupiers of premises prevent rats from living and breeding on their property.

## 2.7 Possums

Possums are a protected species under the

1. *National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972*, and
2. *The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1985*.
3. *The Animal Welfare Regulations 2012*.

Council does not provide a service to remove possums from private or Council owned properties, however it offers approved traps which can be hired to residents after they have obtained a permit to trap from Department of Environment and Heritage.

## 2.8 Snakes

Snakes are protected under National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972. Snakes that pose an unacceptable risk on land under the care and control of Council will be managed by contracted snake catchers/handlers who have the permits and training complying with National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 will capture and re-locate hazardous snakes when possible.

## 2.9 European Wasps

Council will provide a free service to destroy European wasp nests on private and commercial properties. The landowner will be responsible for identifying the exact location of European wasp nests.

## 2.10 Insects and Other Invertebrates (e.g. termites, millipedes, bees, ants etc.)

The CEO will implement appropriate procedures and guidelines for the management options regarding insect and invertebrates on land under the care and control of Council. Factors such as public risk, asset protection and nuisance would determine the methods of management. Management methods may include habitat destruction, eradication using pesticide/s, removal and re-location, monitoring or no action.

## 2.11 Mice

Mice may occur naturally in the environment for a number of reasons. The fact that a property may appear untidy does not necessarily mean that these animals originate from that land. A reasoned assessment by a Council officer must be made taking into account the specific circumstances. For example if a property were located next to a creek line or large area of open space the origin of the animals may not be at all related to a specific property.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

### CEO

Refers to the Chief Executive Officer (including their delegate) of the City of Tea Tree Gully.

### City

Refers to the City of Tea Tree Gully area.

### Declared Animals

Animals that are regulated under the Landscapes South Australia Act 2019 and the Department of Environment and Water Draft Regional Landscape Plan 2021-26. Declared Animals, due to their pest threat to primary industries, the natural environment and public safety and have defined hierarchy of control recommendations.

### Declared Plants

Plants that are regulated under the Landscapes South Australia Act 2019 and the Department of Environment and Water Draft Regional Landscape Plan 2021-26. Declared Plants are significant

weed threats to our State's primary production industries, natural environments and public safety and have defined hierarchy of control recommendations

#### Pest Animals

Encompasses Declared Animals and Targeted Pest Animals

#### Pest Plants

Encompasses Declared Plants and Targeted Pest plants

#### PIRSA

Department of Primary Industries and Regions

#### Targeted Pest Animals

Other animals including insects and other invertebrates that are not covered by Natural Resources Management Act but by their population or location present an unacceptable risk to human cohabitation, assets or the environment.

#### Targeted Pest Plants

Other plants that are not covered by Landscapes South Australia Act 2019 and the Department of Environment and Water Draft Regional Landscape Plan 2021-26 but by their population or location present an unacceptable risk to human cohabitation, assets or the environment.

Examples of detrimental effects include:

1. Damage or threats to built assets
2. Damage or threats to natural assets (e.g. soil erosion, habitat destruction or degradation, deoxygenation or increasing turbidity of waterways)
3. Physical harm to humans
4. Complicate rehabilitation efforts

## 4. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

There is no legislative requirement for Council to have a policy relating to this area.

The following legislation applies to this Policy:

Landscapes South Australia Act 2019 and the Department of Environment and Water Draft Regional Landscape Plan 2021-26

This Act promotes sustainable and integrated management of the State's natural resources. Declared Plants and Animals have been specified by the Minister for control under this Act and each declared species may be subject to one or more provisions of the Act. Several Declared Plants and Animals are known to exist on public and private land within the City.

#### *Animal Welfare Act 1985 and Animal Welfare Regulations 2012*

Animals in South Australia must be treated in accordance with the Act and Regulations. This Act applies equally to all animals regardless of their value or status (i.e. threatened or pest species). Compliance with the requirements of the Act is mandatory.

Under section 13 of the Act, anyone who ill-treats an animal is guilty of an offence. The Act lists the types of actions which constitute ill-treatment. This Act is enforced by the RSPCA, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (Department of Environment and Water) wardens, livestock animal health officers, biosecurity officers and the police.

[National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972](#)

This Act provides the legislative framework for dealing with native fauna in South Australia. Native mammals, reptiles, most native birds and some frogs are protected in South Australia.

The Act provides for a permit system to keep and sell most native animals, including mammals, birds and reptiles in South Australia. Department of Environment and Water administers this permit system.

[Development Act 1993 and Development Regulations 2008](#)

Under this Act a development approval is not required to remove a Declared Plant.

[South Australian Public Health Act 2011](#)

Under this Act there is capacity in specific instances to control pests such as rats or mice where the circumstances give rise to a risk to public health.

## 4.1~Other references

Council’s document including:

1. Community Engagement (Public Consultation) Policy
2. Fees and Charges Register
3. Order Making Policy
4. Tree Management Policy

## 5. STRATEGIC PLAN/POLICY

### 5.1 Strategic Plan

The following strategic objectives in Council’s Strategic Plan 2025 are the most relevant to this report:

Objective	Comments
<b>Community</b>	
<i>There are opportunities for people to volunteer, give back and share their skills with others</i>	We are represented and assist community groups to undertake volunteer work.
<b>Environment</b>	
<i>Environmentally valuable places and sites that are flourishing and well cared for</i>	Maintenance of reserves and verges increases the amenity of the city.
<i>A community that is protected from public and environmental health risks</i>	Rodent control to eliminate health risk and eradication of pests such as ants, wasps and the relocation of bees.

<i>Our consumption of natural resources is minimized by reducing, reusing and recycling products and materials, and using renewable resources</i>	Mulching of material used for capturing rainfall and increasing ascetics. Logs are maintained in reserves to enhance habitat for native animals.
<i>We are resilient to climate change and equipped to manage the impact of extreme weather events</i>	Clearance of pest plants along the Rivers and creek lines has increased the ability to provide the service as a stormwater mitigation systems.
<i>Our tree canopy is increasing</i>	Eliminating the monoculture of pest plant species allows for natural regeneration of native species.
<b>Places</b>	
<i>Streets, paths, open spaces and parks are appealing, safe and accessible</i>	Weed control to our verges pathways and reserves increases the appeal and use of our city.
<i>Neighbourhoods are easy to move around and are well connected with pedestrian and cycle paths that offer an alternative to cars</i>	Eradication of weeds such as caltrop increases bike user's confidence of travelling around our city.
<b>Leadership</b>	
<i>Leadership and advocacy is focused on the long term interests of the community</i>	Working with neighbouring councils to create a consistent approach to pest plant and animal control.

## 5.2 Organisation Plan

Our Strategic Plan is supported by an Organisation Plan which focuses on four key themes of organisational excellence. The themes most relevant to this report are: Customer Care; Learning & Growth; Future Capability; Sustainable Operations.

## 6. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

This Policy will be implemented by the Chief Executive Officer or relevant portfolio director and managed in accordance with Council's scheme of delegations.