



TASMANIAN WEEDS ACTION FUND STAGE 2: ROUND 1 - SMALL GRANTS

GRANT GUIDELINES

October 2020

The Tasmanian Weeds Action Fund is a \$5 million Tasmanian Government initiative, funded for five years from 2018-19. The funds provided by the state government will be invested with farmers and other community organisations to tackle weeds that are impacting valuable agricultural and environmental assets.

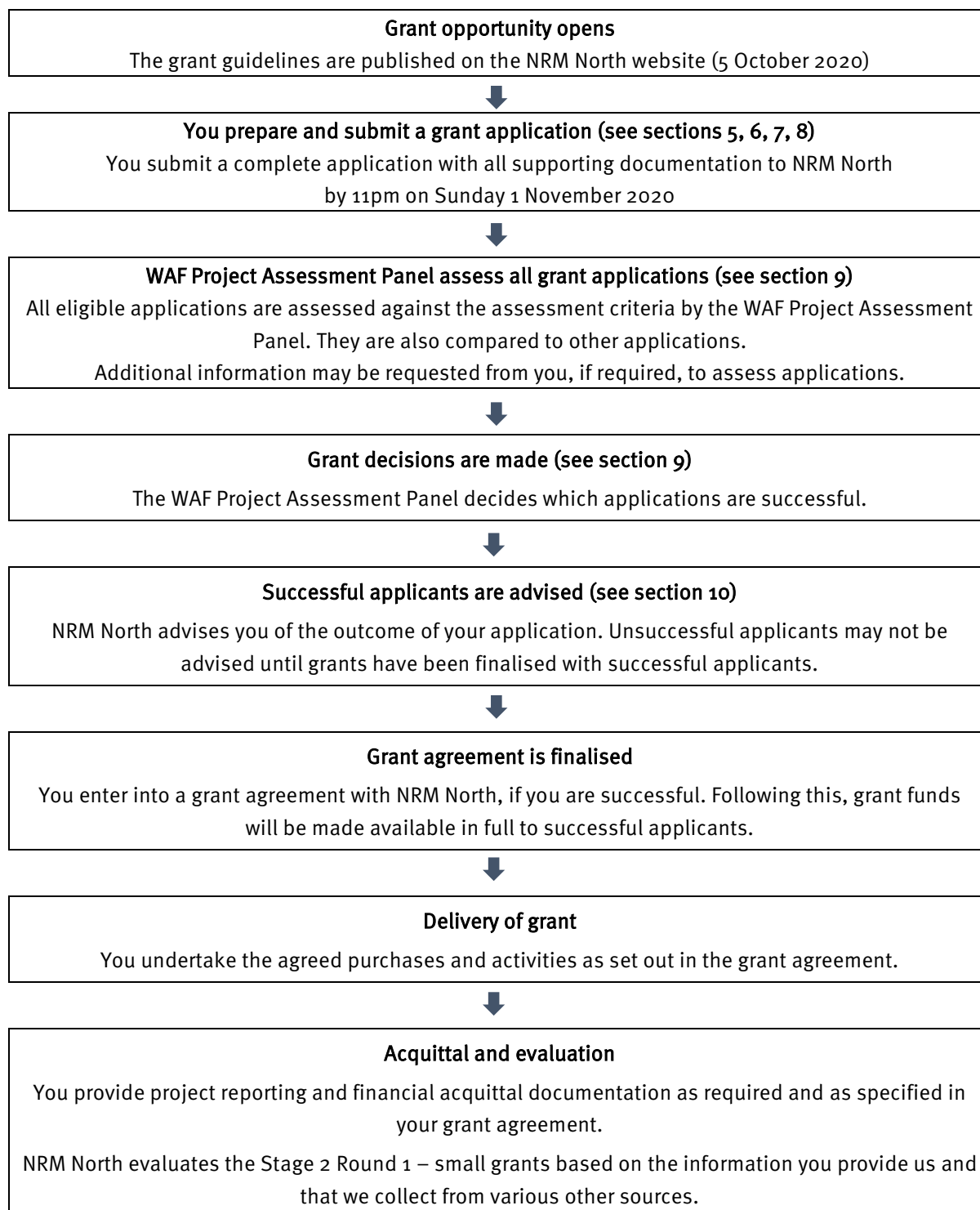


Opening date:	05 October 2020
Application closing time and date:	11 pm Sunday 1 November 2020
State entity:	Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment
Administering entity	Northern Tasmanian Natural Resource Management Association Inc. (trading as NRM North)
Enquiries:	waf@nrmnorth.org.au or 1300 109 676
Date guidelines released:	05 October 2020
Type of grant opportunity:	Open competitive – small grants

Contents

1.	Application Process	1
2.	Introduction	2
3.	Grants Available	2
4.	WAF Program Objectives	2
5.	Eligibility	3
	5.1 Joint (consortia) applications	3
	5.1.1 Lead applicant	4
	5.1.2 Sponsorship	4
	5.1.3 Join an eligible entity	4
	5.2 Who is not eligible	4
	5.3 All other eligibility requirements.....	5
	5.3.1 Insurance	5
	5.3.2 Workplace Health and Safety	5
6.	Eligible Expenditure.....	6
	6.1 Eligible grant activities	6
	6.1.1 Weed Management Planning	6
	6.2 Eligible expenditure	7
	6.3 What the grant money cannot be used for.....	7
7.	Assessment Criteria	8
8.	How to Apply	10
	8.1 Attachments to the application.....	12
	8.2 Late applications	12
9.	Assessment Process	13
10.	Successful Applicants	13
11.	Taxation and Financial Implications of Grant Funding.....	13
12.	Confidentiality.....	14
13.	Publicity of Grant Assistance.....	14
13.	Personal Information Protection	14
14.	Enquiries and Contact Details	14

1. Application Process



2. Introduction

In the 2018-19 State Budget, the Tasmanian Government announced the creation of a Weeds Action Fund (WAF) of \$5 million over five years commencing in 2018. The funds provided by the WAF Program will be invested with farmers, community organisations, land managers and other entities to tackle weeds that are impacting valuable agricultural and environmental assets.

A key principle underpinning the WAF Program is that of *“shared responsibility”*. All the Tasmanian community has a role to play in preventing weeds from becoming a serious threat. Landowners, local government and the broader community are encouraged to be strategic and work together to identify, and where possible, eradicate priority weeds that impact their land.

The WAF Program is also designed to support and drive shared responsibility through co-investment (of cash or in-kind resources) through the life of the program and beyond in an effort to achieve high value for money and long-term, enduring outcomes.

The WAF Program commenced with Stage 1 – Small Grants Program, which provided 34 projects and a total of \$142,545 in 2018-19.

3. Grants Available

Stage 2 Round 1 is a small grants round, providing a total of up to \$200,000.00 (GST exclusive) in 2020-21.

- The minimum grant amount is \$1,000.00
- The maximum grant amount is \$10,000.00
- Small grant projects are to be completed within 12 months.

Please note: another grant round for larger, more complex, multi-year projects will be released with new guidelines later in the 2020-21 financial year.

4. WAF Program Objectives

The WAF Program aims to:

- provide a more strategic and targeted approach to tackling high priority weeds impacting valuable agricultural and environmental assets;
- improve the productive value of agricultural land and protect Tasmania’s natural values through removing the harmful effects of serious weed threats;

- support and co-invest with landowners, local government and the broader community to take sustainable, long-term and effective actions to address high priority weeds with eradication as a key objective; and
- encourage the concept of “shared responsibility” for weed management and biosecurity in general.

5. Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for a grant you must be an individual or an organisation capable of entering into a legally binding and enforceable agreement with NRM North.

Eligible entities include the following:

- individuals;
- community groups;
- primary producers;
- businesses;
- schools;
- local government;
- state government and state government entities¹;
- trustee on behalf of a trust²; or
- peak bodies.

5.1 Joint (consortia) applications

We recognise that some organisations may want to form a consortium and submit a joint application to deliver a project. Applications from consortia or groups are eligible if they are submitted via one of the following options.

¹ Tasmanian Government entity – includes corporate and non-corporate state entities, statutory authorities, and statutory entities.

² trusts are not legal entities in their own right – to be eligible, only the Trustee for the Trust can apply by providing the signed Trust Deed and any subsequent variations with the application form

5.1.1 Lead applicant

The consortium appoints a 'lead applicant' who is solely accountable to NRM North for the delivery of grant activities and who is an eligible entity as per the list above. Only the lead applicant can submit the application form and enter into a grant agreement with NRM North. The application must identify all other members of the proposed group.

Eligible organisations can form a consortium with ineligible organisations; however, the lead applicant must be an eligible entity.

All project partners must sign the application form to indicate their agreement to be part of the application. The lead applicant must have a formal arrangement in place with each project partner prior to execution of a grant agreement.

5.1.2 Sponsorship

If a group is not a legal entity able to contract with NRM North, (e.g. they are an unincorporated association), they can still participate in the Weeds Action Fund Stage 2, Round 1 small grant through a sponsorship arrangement. This is where an eligible entity applies on the group's or entity's behalf.

This means that the sponsor will be legally responsible for meeting the contractual obligations of the grant.

5.1.3 Join an eligible entity

If a group is not a legal entity able to contract with NRM North, they may consider joining or becoming a member of an eligible entity (e.g. a local incorporated Landcare group). In this case, the eligible entity would then need to submit the application form and enter into a grant agreement with NRM North.

5.2 Who is not eligible

You are not eligible to apply if you are one of the following entity types:

- unincorporated association or group of people;
- Commonwealth government entities (including government business enterprises); and
- political parties, political organisations or lobbyists.

Ineligible applicants can participate as a project partner in a joint or consortium application but cannot apply as the lead applicant.

5.3 All other eligibility requirements

To be eligible, applicants must:

- clearly demonstrate how the proposed activity and/or purchase will contribute to the WAF Program objectives;
- have the ability to complete the activities or purchases within the agreed timeframe of the approved grant;
- commit to reporting and providing a statutory declaration following the completion of agreed activities;
- provide a signature from the landowner(s) and land manager(s) for your activity, where you are not the landowner/manager;
- provide a signature from each of the project partners, in the case of joint applications;
- ensure that all permits, licences or other authorisations are obtained and completed where applicable; and
- ensure that any contractors or individuals undertaking weed control activities have the required training, certificates and licenses relevant to the weed management activities being carried out.

5.3.1 Insurance

It is the responsibility of successful applicants to seek and ensure that they have appropriate and adequate insurance(s) in place to undertake the agreed grant activities at the time of entering into a grant agreement with NRM North. Consult your insurance policy Product Disclosure Statement or contact your insurer to clarify if you have adequate and appropriate cover for the project. If your application is successful you must provide a Certificate of Currency to prove your insurance cover with the signed grant deed.

It is also the responsibility of successful applicants to ensure that any subcontractors engaged by the applicant in relation to the agreement with NRM North, hold the appropriate insurances.

5.3.2 Workplace Health and Safety

Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) is a very high priority for the WAF Program. You must comply (and ensure that any of your subcontractors comply) with the provisions of all relevant statutes, regulations, by-laws and requirements of any Commonwealth, State, Territory or local authority including those arising under WHS laws.

You will be responsible for identification and assessment of safety risks, identification and implementation of mitigation strategies to address such risks, and for ensuring the safety of any participants in the project.

You will be required to implement high standards of WHS at all project sites to the maximum extent possible, including providing a safe work environment and appropriate safety equipment for all project participants and ensuring safe access to project work sites.

6. Eligible Expenditure

6.1 Eligible grant activities

The type of activities eligible for funding through the WAF Program include:

- weed management activities such as physical removal of weeds, herbicide applications, mulching, and the like. This may include:
 - restoration activities (e.g. revegetation with native species to reduce future weed reinfestation), only where this is part of a weed management strategy;
- development and implementation of education, extension and support programs for local landowners and/or regions to support eradication and/or control of priority weeds; and
- development of a Weed Management Plan to underpin future effective management and control of a priority weed/s (see section 6.1.1).

6.1.1 Weed Management Planning

Robust, evidence-based planning is a critical component of strategic weed management. Applicants who are interested in undertaking a larger, more complex, multi-year project through a future round under the WAF Program are encouraged to apply for funding through this small grants round to undertake the critical planning elements of the project.

The types of activities eligible for funding as part of developing a Weed Management Plan include:

- surveying and mapping priority weed distribution, identifying, and engaging with key stakeholders and collaborators, preparing a plan with clear objectives, best practice weed management activities, and clear targets; and
- plans may include a single property or cover multiple properties and tenures and focus on a single weed or cover multiple weed species.

For further guidance on developing a Weed Management Plan as an eligible activity, see the *Guidance for Developing a Weed Management Plan* on the NRM North website: www.nrmnorth.org.au

6.2 Eligible expenditure

The type of purchases eligible for funding through the WAF Program include:

- tools, equipment and protective clothing to be used in proposed grant activities;
- weed suppressing materials and/or chemicals to be used in proposed grant activities (noting application of chemicals must be applied in accordance with all legal requirements); and/or
- purchases that support weed management programs (not the cost of items that would normally be purchased as part of existing agricultural or land management activities).

Not all expenditure on your proposed project may be eligible for grant funding. The Assessment Panel makes the final decision on what is eligible expenditure. You must incur the expenditure on your project between the start date and the end or completion date for your grant agreement for it to be eligible.

6.3 What the grant money cannot be used for

The following activities are **NOT** eligible for funding:

- activities or purchases otherwise funded, e.g. through Commonwealth, State or local government programs, or through private funding (activities that build on or are otherwise additional to existing funded activities are eligible, where the application clearly sets out the required details for the additional element for which funding is sought);
- purchases or expenses related to day-to-day operations of a business ('business as usual');
- the purchase or transport of livestock or feed;
- the purchase of machinery;
- construction, repairs or modification of infrastructure such as sheds, bridges, culverts and tracks;
- hospitality (e.g. restaurant dinner with alcohol). You can include business catering as part of the grant (e.g. sandwiches/BBQ and drinks at an all-day working bee);
- research;
- projects that cannot be completed within the agreed timeframe;
- activities considered to have a purely commercial or private benefit, or for fundraising;
- grants from you to another entity;

- legal expenses;
- overseas travel;
- activities that have commenced before execution of the grant agreement;
- costs incurred in the preparation of your grant application or related documentation;
- any general operating expenses - funding will not cover expenses such as electricity, lease/rent payments; telephone, uniforms etc. that are part of the ongoing expenses of the applicant/s;
- public liability costs for the applicant (including project partners or consortia); and/or
- projects or activities which are the applicant's legal responsibility to maintain, and for which the activities do not contribute to a broader local or regional priority outcome.

As per section 7, your application will be assessed against the eligibility criteria. Only eligible applications will move to the next assessment stage.

7. Assessment Criteria

You must address all four of the following assessment criteria in the application.

The application form includes text character limits. The application form will not accept characters beyond this limit. Please note spaces are included in the character limit.

The amount of information you provide in your application should be relative to your project's size, complexity, and the grant amount requested. In completing the application, you must assume that the assessor knows nothing about your project so ensure your responses to questions are clear and succinct to allow the assessor to score your application against the following criteria.

Criterion 1. Priority of Weed Species

Your application will be assessed to determine the relative priority of the target weed species. The list of priority weed species for the WAF Program are detailed in the Weeds Action Fund Stage 2 Round 1 list, available on the NRM North website.

For the purpose of assessment, weeds from higher priority weed groups as set out in the list will be viewed more favourably than weeds from lower priority weed groups.

When addressing the criterion, applicants will be required to clearly identify:

- what your weed species is/are; and
- the priority group of your weed/s.

Criterion 2. Contribution to the WAF objectives

Your application will be assessed to determine to what extent your proposed project objectives contribute to the objectives of the WAF Program (see section 4). As stated, the WAF Program is seeking projects that are strategic and targeted, that focus on eradication as a key objective, that build and utilise partnerships to deliver effective outcomes, and that commit to shared responsibility through co-investment and maintenance of outcomes beyond the life of the project.

When addressing the criterion applicants will be required to describe the proposed project and its objectives.

Your application should also clearly set out:

- if your project is focused on **eradication** of a weed species at a state-wide, regional, or municipal scale (this applies to weeds from priority groups 1, 2 and 3);
- if your project is focused on **containment** of a weed species – that is, prevention of spread by high priority weeds to ‘clean’ areas (this applies to weeds from priority groups 3 and 4); and
- if your project is focused on **protection** of a high value agricultural and/or environmental asset.

Criterion 3. Effectiveness of the proposed project activities to achieve the proposed project objectives

Your application will be assessed to determine how well your proposed project activities will achieve the objective(s) you have identified.

In particular, applications will be assessed against the following considerations:

- whether activities are technically feasible, appropriate, best-practice, and achievable within the project timeframes;
- whether the project adequately involves all the key stakeholders relevant to the project;
- whether the project is well planned and considered;
- whether your application identifies links to relevant plans and programs, where appropriate; and
- whether the application demonstrates ongoing maintenance of project sites beyond the duration of the WAF Program.

When addressing the criterion applicants will be required to describe the proposed project activities:

- What are the proposed project activities (what will you do)?
- When will you carry out the proposed activities?
- Who will participate in or contribute to the proposed project activities?
- How will the proposed activities contribute to achieving the project objective(s)?

Criterion 4. Project proposal suitability for public funding and value for money

Your application will be assessed to determine the extent to which the project proposal represents value for money and is suitable for public funding.

When addressing the criterion applicants will be required to:

- describe the public benefits that will occur because of the proposed project (i.e. what will be the benefit to the community from achieving your objective?); and
- detail the proposed project budget, including the level of co-investment by the applicant and/or collaborators (this could be financial or in-kind e.g. labour, expertise, equipment), during and after the project period.

Co-investment is key to the WAF Program objectives (section 4). All applicants should strongly consider providing a commensurate level of co-investment (either financial or in-kind) to demonstrate their commitment to shared responsibility for weed management.

8. How to Apply

Before applying, you must read and understand these guidelines, and the questions and answers page of the NRM North website.

You may submit more than one application. A separate application form must be submitted for each proposed project. If more than one application is submitted for the same project proposal, the latest accepted application form will be assessed by the panel.

If you need more help with the application process, submitting an application online, have any technical difficulties or find an error in your application after submission, but before the closing date and time, you should contact NRM North immediately via email: WAF@nrmnorth.org.au.

To apply, applicants must:

- read and understand the guidelines;
- complete the application form in full;
- include any necessary attachments; and
- submit the form and supporting information to reach NRM North by 11:00 pm AEDT on 1 November 2020, either by email, in person or post to address below.

NRM North does not have to accept any late applications or additional information or requests from you to correct your application after the closing time.

If we find an error or something missing, we may ask you for clarification or additional information. This will not change the nature of your application. However, we can refuse to accept any additional information from you that would change your application after the closing time.

You should keep a copy of your application and any supporting documents.

You will receive notification acknowledging the receipt of your application.

Applications must be submitted to:

Email: waf@nrmnorth.org.au

Post: WAF Coordinator
NRM North
PO Box 1224
Launceston TAS 7250

In person: WAF Coordinator
Level 2, 63-65 Cameron Street
Launceston TAS 7250

Important

It is the applicant's responsibility to provide all necessary information at the time of submission. The grant administrators cannot guarantee that they will be able to seek clarification from applicants if something is missing or unclear.

8.1 Attachments to the application

All the following documents (if relevant) **must be attached** to your application for it to proceed to assessment:

- trust Deed and any subsequent variations, if applying as a Trustee on behalf of a Trust;
- consent from landowner(s) or land manager(s) of the land which is the subject of the proposal (if you are not the landholder or land manager);
- consent from project collaborators if you are submitting a joint or consortium application; and
- map of your project site(s);
- specific technical advice; and
- contractor quotes.

You must attach supporting documentation according to the instructions provided within the application form. You should only attach requested documents. Do not attach any other documents to your application form, as we will not consider information in attachments we have not asked for.

Please note: There is a 10mb limit for the size of emails with attachments; please compress documents and image files so your submission is within this limit.

8.2 Late applications

We will not accept late applications unless an applicant has experienced exceptional circumstances that prevent the submission of the application. Broadly, exceptional circumstances are events characterised by one or more of the following:

- reasonably unforeseeable;
- beyond the applicant's control; and
- unable to be managed or resolved within the application period.

Exceptional circumstances will be considered on their merits and in accordance with probity principles.

9. Assessment Process

Applications will be assessed by the WAF Project Assessment Panel. The panel will consist of members with a knowledge of strategic weed management, project governance, natural resource management and weed management in agricultural and natural landscapes.

The panel will be responsible for reviewing and approving project proposals. Panel members will assess applications against the WAF Program objectives and assessment criteria (section 7), and will compare them to other eligible applications. The panel may seek further information from the proponent. The panel may also approve a project in part and/or recommend changes to the project.

It is the applicant's responsibility to provide all necessary information at the time of submission. The grant administrators cannot guarantee that they will be able to seek clarification from applicants if something is missing or unclear.

Panel members will be required to notify the panel of the existence of a conflict of interest or the possibility of a perceived conflict of interest.

10. Successful Applicants

Successful applicants will be notified via phone or in writing and will be required to enter into a grant agreement with NRM North. Following this the grant funds will be made available in full to successful applicants to carry out the agreed activities and purchases.

The grant agreement will state the maximum funding to be provided. If additional costs are incurred these must be met by the applicant.

Successful applicants will need to provide a satisfactory report and statutory declaration to NRM North to demonstrate proof of completed activities and purchases.

Successful applicants are required to advise NRM North of any changes which may affect the completion of the agreed activities or purchases.

Unsuccessful applicants will be notified in writing.

11. Taxation and Financial Implications of Grant Funding

Grants under the WAF Program attract GST. Payment amounts will be increased to include the amount of GST payable, where the applicant is registered for GST.

The receipt of funding from this program may be treated as income by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). While grants are typically treated as assessable income for taxation purposes, how they are treated will depend on the grantee's particular circumstances.

It is recommended that applicants consider seeking independent advice about the possible tax implications for receiving a grant under the WAF Program from a tax advisor, financial advisor and/or the ATO, prior to submitting an application.

12. Confidentiality

The relevant parties, including the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and the Environment (the Department) and the authorising organisations, will use and disclose the information provided by applicants for the purposes of discharging their respective functions under the Grant Guidelines. The Department and NRM North may use information received in applications and during the performance of the WAF Program for reporting and evaluation purposes.

13. Publicity of Grant Assistance

As the funding provider, the Tasmanian Government is accountable for the distribution of those funds. As part of the accountability process, the Department may publicise the level of financial assistance, the identity of the recipient, and the purpose of the financial assistance.

13. Personal Information Protection

Personal Information will be managed in accordance with the *Personal Information Protection Act 2004*. This information may be accessed by the individual to whom it is related by request to the appropriate organisation to which the grant application was submitted.

14. Enquiries and Contact Details

Any enquiries on the WAF Program, and requests for further information on the grants and application process, should be directed to NRM North:

Email: waf@nrmnorth.org.au

Phone: 1300 109 676

Website: <https://nrmnorth.org.au/land/weeds-action-fund/>