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Research Director
Agriculture and Environment Committee
Parliament House
aec@parliament.qld.gov.au
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Sir/Madam,

Submission for the Inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants (weeds) and their control in Queensland

Moreton Bay Regional Council would like to provide the submission outlined below to the Parliamentary Inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants (weeds) and their control in Queensland.

Moreton Bay Regional Council (MBRC) covers an area of just over 2 000 sq km and is one of the fastest developing areas in Australia. There is a diverse range of environments across the region from coastal areas to urban centres, rural townships and mountain villages. This diverse environment and land use results in a range of weed management issues for Council, particular under the implementation requirements of the *Biosecurity Act 2014*.

Prickly acacia is not a problem in this area so the submission will focus on Giant rat's tail grass and Fireweed.

Fireweed

MBRC area has previously had small isolated infestations of Fireweed but over recent years this has dramatically increased which can be attributed to the use of contaminated turf. Due to the number of seeds a single plant can produce and the quick growth pattern of this plant, once it is established in an area control is difficult and expensive. The best option is to protect areas and not allow contamination to occur.

Fireweed infestation is currently high in areas south of the Brisbane River, this is also the area of major turf suppliers for South East Queensland. MBRC sought assistance from Biosecurity Queensland in 2015 to implement either regulatory or policy actions to reduce the risk of Fireweed contaminated turf being sold and spread into Fireweed free areas. This was unsuccessful and Council was advised at the time that there was nothing that could be done due to the level of infestation in the turf production areas.

MBRC has implemented a roadside treatment program to regularly treat Council road reserves for key Fireweed areas. To assist landowners and to ensure quick and effective control Council sends advisory letters at the start of the Fireweed season. These letters go to properties that have either previously had an issue or are at risk of having an issue. The problem then becomes a lack of control on State land either the road reserves on State managed roads or parcels of land held by State. There is no proactive program in these areas in this region and any action is only after significant seeding has occurred resulting in ineffective management.

Giant Rats Tail Grass (GRT)

The exclusion of Parramatta Grass from the same categories as GRT in the *Biosecurity Act 2014*, has made effective management contentious. Field identification between these two species is very difficult for the average Local Government Officer. Previously these two species were treated as one under the *Land Protection Act 2002* eliminating this confusion. It is likely in a number of situations that formal identification will be required for these species before notices can be actioned resulting in delays and increased workloads.

For any enquires relating to this submission please contact **Cecily Draper** on a [REDACTED] or email [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully



Tim Ditchburn
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Regulatory Services Department