



16 January 2017

Research Director
Agriculture and Environment Committee
PARLIAMENT HOUSE QLD 4000

Email: aec@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam

INQUIRY INTO THE IMPACTS OF INVASIVE PLANTS (WEEDS) AND THEIR CONTROL IN QUEENSLAND

Please find below Council's submission in regards to the inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants (weeds) and their control in Queensland.

The responsibilities of local governments in relation to the control of prohibited, restricted and invasive plants imposed under s.48 of the *Biosecurity Act 2014* are reasonable, and local governments are meeting those obligations.

The obligation of local government under s.48 of the Act is to manage invasive biosecurity matter for the local government area.

Council is restricted in managing invasive biosecurity matter due to financial constraints which limit the amount of resources that Council is capable of dedicating towards managing invasive plants. To plan for the management of invasive plants at a strategic level Council engages with a group of stakeholders including state departments to prioritise management efforts.

Council has a Local Area Pest Management Plan which identifies the invasive plants and also locally declared plants relevant to our local government area. The Tablelands region has a very high demand for invasive weed management due to the diversity in landscape from wet tropics to dry savannah. In addition to invasive weeds, the increase in demand for wild dog management is becoming overwhelming.

One of the biggest barriers to effectively managing invasive plants are the inequities and lack of management across tenures. Council is very reluctant to enforce powers and compliance upon landholders when other tenure managers such as state government, resource managers and also Council are unable to manage invasive plants on their own land. It is acknowledged that these inequities are likely due to financial constraints where land managers are unable to effectively manage the invasive plant burden on their land which leads to infestation across tenures and landscapes.

Section 48 of the Act does not cater for locally identified and declared pest weed issues which are often more urgent than those identified as invasive matter under the Act.



Examples of effective programs within the Tablelands Regional Council area are the management of *Stevia ovata* (invasive plant) and Crofton weed (non invasive plant) which have multiple stakeholders including Crown land managers, Council, Regional Organisation of Council and NRM groups. These examples highlight that it is not necessarily whether the plant is a declared invasive plant that influences where resources and management efforts are directed. If Council were forced to strictly manage invasive plants, newly identified (non declared) weed incursions might be left untreated and eradication opportunities missed.

Programs for the control of weeds on Crown land administered by the Department of Natural Resources and Mines are effective

Similarly to Council, State Government departments are faced with the same resource and financial constraints which restrict the ability for effective management of invasive plants on Crown land. The only significant resistance that Council has experienced in the past relates to the management of invasive animals that harbour on the large tracts of Crown land throughout the Region.

The *Biosecurity Act 2014* places more of an obligation on State land managers than previous legislation. With the legislation being still fairly new, it is too early to comment on whether the Act will have a positive influence on the management of invasive weeds and animals.

Overall, however, Council engage at a local level with DNRM and other state land managers and collectively plan at a strategic level for the most effective use of available resources in order to manage invasive plants. As weeds are present across the landscape and do not recognise tenure boundaries, the most effective programs are those that have a collaborative management approach.

Biosecurity Queensland's weeds programs, including biological controls and new technologies, are adequately funded and effective at controlling weeds.

In most cases, biological controls alone are not effective at controlling weeds. Biological controls should be used as part of a combination of control techniques including chemical and physical, depending on the weed species.

Tablelands Regional Council as well as other North Queensland Council's are currently faced with the urgent need for research for alternative control methods for pest weed *Navua sedge*. *Navua sedge* is debilitating for graziers affected by *Navua sedge*. The only means of control is via chemical application and Council has been lobbying for funds to be allocated towards research on more control technologies such as a biological rust or fungus that will form part of a combined control technique against *Navua sedge*.

Environmental programs administered by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection impact favourably on weed control programs administered by the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries and local governments.

Regional and local pest management groups and committees provide an opportunity for these Departments to collaborate along with other stakeholders such as local government and NRM groups. As previously mentioned, weeds don't recognise boundaries and tenures so any effective program will be a multi stakeholder partnership in order for the program to be truly effective.

In North Queensland the facilitation of multi stakeholder partnerships is largely provided through the Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC).

Federal, state and local government weeds programs are coordinated to maximise their achievements and to have a whole of government approach.

Council's and Departments in North Queensland have a voice through FNQROC with representation at federal, state and local government forums. This contributes greatly towards a whole of government approach. Pest management planning through the tiers of government is consistent however I have seen inconsistencies with on-ground application of strategies within government departments, mainly in regards to wild dogs.

As case studies for the inquiry, the committee will examine the impacts and control of three key weeds in Queensland:

- prickly acacia
- giant rat's tail grass, and
- fireweed.

Tablelands Regional Council has giant rat's tail grass and fireweed present within our local government area. Both have impacts upon the agriculture industry, particularly grazing land.

Fireweed is present in only a small area of the Shire and Council has an intensive management plan with the aim of eradicating it from the region – and North Queensland. Although Fireweed only covers a very small area, the impact is noticeable to the agriculture industry with beast losses as a result of the weed.

Giant rat's tail grass is certainly impacting upon the dryer grazing areas and resulting in loss of pasture however there is an effective pre-emergent herbicide available as a very valuable management tool.

A bigger weed issue experienced in our Region is Navua sedge that Council seeks urgent funds dedicated towards research on more control capabilities.

Although not toxic to animals, Navua sedge has very low nutritional value and is generally avoided by grazing stock (Vitelli et al. 2010).

Experiences with graziers on the coastal areas where Navua sedge has spread widely into grazing pastures indicates that cattle generally avoid eating sedge, however if they are exposed, the sedge can form a mass in the stomach resulting in the death of the beast.

In Tablelands, agriculture is the largest employer, generating 1,402 local jobs in 2014/15 (ABS, 2016). The potential loss in productivity associated with grazing is a cause of concern, particularly for those in the dairy and intensive livestock grazing industries (Kerr et al. 1995, Vitelli et al. 2010). Navua sedge has reduced the carrying capacity of pastures in Fiji by up to 40% (Karan 1975), and is a major cause of low milk production (Kerr et al. 1995). If the Tablelands agricultural industry was to have the same experience, this would have a devastating effect on the industry and the economy of the Tablelands.

Council conducts an intensive Navua sedge management regime with the objective being asset management and keeping the weed out of our prime agricultural areas and reducing its means of spread.

Navua sedge is not a listed declared invasive plant under the Act which also demonstrates that it is essential to recognise local area priorities as well as state and federally recognised weeds.

Council has had strong support from industry and other Council's in the region in support of allocation of funds towards research on more management capabilities with letters of support from the following as per attached:

Inquiry into the impacts of invasive plants (weeds)

Agriculture and Environment Committee

INQUIRY INTO THE IMPACTS OF INVASIVE PLANTS (WEEDS) AND THEIR CONTROL IN QUEENSLAND

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Submission No. 039

- Mareeba Shire Council
- Cairns Regional Council
- Cook Shire Council
- Cassowary Coast Regional Council
- Hinchinbrook Shire Council
- Carpentaria Shire Council
- Etheridge Shire Council
- Scenic Rim Regional Council
- Malanda Beef Plan Group
- Landholders – Paul & Roberta Michna
- Wabubudda Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
- Contractor Andrew Lilley
- Tableland Canegrowers Ltd
- Mareeba District Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association Inc.
- NQ Banana Growers Co-Operative Association Limited

To discuss this submission in further detail please contact Council's Manager Regulatory Services,
Kirsty Lamperd [REDACTED]

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]
CR JOE PARONELLA
MAYOR

ATTACHMENT 1: Support/concern letters.

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



28 November 2016



Dear Joe

LETTER OF SUPPORT – NAVUA SEDGE

It is with great interest that Carpentaria Shire Council is observing the efforts that Tablelands Regional Council (TRC) are dedicating towards managing the pest weed Navua sedge on roadside and through supporting landholders by lobbying for more effective management options.

Carpentaria Shire Council also suffers the impacts of this weed as well as others and can benefit from the efforts that your Council is taking. As such, my Council fully supports the funding proposal that TRC is presenting to the State Government targeting the pest weed Navua sedge.

We understand the funding proposal that Council is putting forward involves the implementation of two programs summarised as follows:

1. On-ground management and education on the Tablelands

The on-ground management program involves a three year chemical treatment regime using best practice methods including aligning with slashing regimes. The aim of the treatment program is to protect areas free of Navua sedge, eradicate it from valuable asset zones and high risk areas of spread and reduce chronic roadside infestations. The three year program will also include a community education program focusing on best on farm practice, weed seed hygiene and weed identification.

2. Research and development for a residual pre-emergent and long term management solutions

The research and development proposal includes an ethics based chemical pre-emergent trial and/or other management options, rainfast pot trials using 'Sempra', registration of chemical/s and a main roads spraying regime.



-2-

My Council recognises the funding proposal will be of benefit to communities from all of our local government areas in Far North Queensland and we reiterate our support.

Yours faithfully,



Lyall (Jack) Bawden
MAYOR



The heart of Cape York Peninsula



Dear Mayor Paronella

It is with great interest that I am observing the efforts that Tablelands Regional Council is dedicating towards managing pest weed Navua sedge on roadside and also supporting landholders by lobbying for more effective management options.

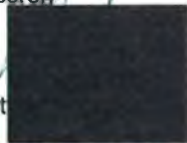
Cook Shire Council also suffers the impacts of this weed as well as others and can benefit from the efforts that your Council is taking. As such, I fully support the funding proposal that TRC is presenting to the State Government targeting pest weed Navua sedge.

I understand the funding proposal that Council is putting forward involves the implementation of two programs summarized as follows:

1. On-ground management and education on the Tablelands
The on-ground management program involves a three year chemical treatment regime using best practice methods including aligning with slashing regimes. The aim of the treatment program is to protect areas free of Navua sedge, eradicate it from valuable asset zones and high risk areas of spread and reduce chronic roadside infestations. The three year program will also include a community education program focusing on best on farm practice, weed seed hygiene and weed identification.
2. Research and development for a residual pre-emergent and long term management solutions
The research and development proposal includes an ethics based chemical pre-emergent trial and/or other management options, rainfast pot trials using 'Sempra', registration of chemical/s and a main roads spraying regime.

The funding proposal will be of benefit to constituents from all of our local government areas in Far North Queensland.

Yours sincerely



Peter Scot
Mayor





Mareeba
SHIRE COUNCIL

25 November 2016



TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

It is with great interest that I am observing the efforts that Tablelands Regional Council is dedicating towards managing pest weed Navua sedge on roadside and also supporting landholders by lobbying for more effective management options.

Mareeba Shire Council also suffers the impacts of this weed as well as others and can benefit from the efforts that your Council is taking. As such, I fully support the funding proposal that TRC is presenting to the State Government targeting pest weed Navua sedge.

I understand the funding proposal that Council is putting forward involves the implementation of two programs summarized as follows:

1. On-ground management and education on the Tablelands

The on-ground management program involves a three year chemical treatment regime using best practice methods including aligning with slashing regimes. The aim of the treatment program is to protect areas free of Navua sedge, eradicate it from valuable asset zones and high risk areas of spread and reduce chronic roadside infestations. The three year program will also include a community education program focusing on best on farm practice, weed seed hygiene and weed identification.

2. Research and development for a residual pre-emergent and long term management solutions

The research and development proposal includes an ethics based chemical pre-emergent trial and/or other management options, rainfast pot trials using 'Sempra', registration of chemical/s and a main roads spraying regime.

The funding proposal will be of benefit to constituents from all of our local government areas in Far North Queensland.

Yours faithfully

TOM GILMORE
MAYOR



**HINCHINBROOK
SHIRE COUNCIL**



28 November 2016

To Whom it May Concern

Council is supportive and appreciative of the efforts that Tablelands Regional Council (TRC) is dedicating towards managing the pest weed Navua Sedge on roadsides and also supporting landholders by lobbying for more effective management options.

Hinchinbrook Shire Council also suffers the impacts of this weed as well as others and will benefit from the efforts that TRC is taking, given that the lands within TRC is essentially the Herbert River Catchment Area, and weed seed spread due to rain/flooding events will occur downstream into the Herbert River Valley. As such, I fully support the funding proposal that TRC is presenting to the State Government targeting pest weed Navua Sedge.

I understand the funding proposal that Council is putting forward involves the implementation of two programs summarized as follows:

1. *On-ground management and education on the Tablelands -*

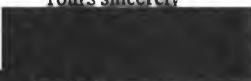

The on-ground management program involves a three year chemical treatment regime using best practice methods, including aligning with slashing regimes. The aim of the treatment program is to protect areas free of Navua sedge, eradicate it from valuable asset zones and high risk areas of spread and reduce chronic roadside infestations. The three year program will also include a community education program focusing on best on farm practice, weed seed hygiene and weed identification.

2. *Research and development for a residual pre-emergent and long term management solutions -*

The research and development proposal includes an ethics based chemical pre-emergent trial and/or other management options, rainfast pot trials using 'Sempra', registration of chemical/s and a main roads spraying regime.

The funding proposal will be of benefit to constituents from our local government areas having regard to the aforementioned weed seed spread issue, not to mention all other landholders in Far North Queensland.

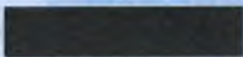
Yours sincerely


 Ramon Jayo
Mayor





Office of the Mayor



28 November 2016

To whom it may concern,

It is with great interest that I am observing the efforts that Tablelands Regional Council is dedicating towards managing pest weed Navua sedge on roadside and also supporting landholders by lobbying for more effective management options.

Cairns Regional Council also suffers the impacts of this weed as well as others and can benefit from the efforts that your Council is taking. As such, I fully support the funding proposal that TRC is presenting to the State Government targeting pest weed Navua sedge.

I understand the funding proposal that Council is putting forward involves the implementation of two programs summarized as follows:

- 1. On-ground management and education on the Tablelands
The on-ground management program involves a three year chemical treatment regime using best practice methods including aligning with slashing regimes. The aim of the treatment program is to protect areas free of Navua sedge, eradicate it from valuable asset zones and high risk areas of spread and reduce chronic roadside infestations. The three year program will also include a community education program focusing on best on farm practice, weed seed hygiene and weed identification.
- 2. Research and development for a residual pre-emergent and long term management solutions
The research and development proposal includes an ethics based chemical pre-emergent trial and/or other management options, rainfast pot trials using 'Semptra', registration of chemical/s and a main roads spraying regime.

The funding proposal will be of benefit to constituents from all of our local government areas in Far North Queensland.

Yours sincerely



Cr Bob Manning
Mayor





28 November 2016



Dear Cr Paronella

Navua Sedge

I am pleased to write in support of the application of the Tablelands Regional Council for funding by the Queensland Government to assist in management of the pest weed Navua sedge.

Given the ever increasing focus on protecting special natural resource areas across Queensland and on proper management of our flood plains, wetlands and waterways, it is timely for both levels of government to work together on this issue.

Like the Tablelands region, the Scenic Rim has a significant agricultural economy and is pursuing exciting opportunities in agritourism. I agree it is the prudent and proper role of the Tablelands Regional Council display leadership in best practice management and community education while there is still time and opportunity to control the spread of Navua sedge.

I encourage and support your Council in this endeavour and trust that the funding application will receive favourable consideration.

Yours sincerely

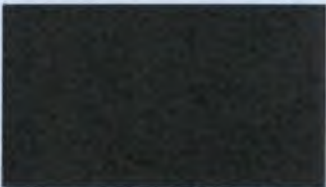


Cr Greg Christensen
MAYOR





28 November 2016



Dear Cr Paronella,

It is with great interest that I am observing the efforts that the Tablelands Regional Council is dedicating towards managing the pest weed *Navua sedge* on roadsides and also supporting landholders by lobbying for more effective management options.

The Cassowary Coast region also suffers the impacts of this weed and can benefit from the efforts that your Council is taking. As such, I fully support the funding proposal that Tablelands Regional Council is presenting to the State Government targeting pest weed *Navua sedge*.

I understand the funding proposal that your Council is putting forward involves the implementation of two programs summarised as follows:

1. On-ground management and education on the Tablelands

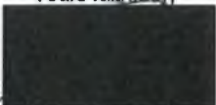
The on-ground management program involves a three year chemical treatment regime using best practice methods including aligning with slashing regimes. The aim of the treatment program is to protect areas free of *Navua sedge*, eradicate it from valuable asset zones and high risk areas of spread and reduce chronic roadside infestations. The three year program will also include a community education program focusing on best on farm practice, weed seed hygiene and weed identification.

2. Research and development for a residual pre-emergent and long term management solutions

The research and development proposal includes an ethics based chemical pre-emergent trial and/or other management options, rainfall pot trials using *Sempre*, registration of chemicals and a main roads spraying regime.

The funding proposal will be of benefit to constituents from all of our local government areas in Far North Queensland.

Yours faithfully,



John Kremastos
MAYOR





ETHERIDGE SHIRE COUNCIL

41 St George Street, Georgetown QLD 4871 Australia
Phone: (07) 4079 9090 Fax: (07) 4062 1285 Email: info@etheridge.qld.gov.au

The Golden Heart of the Gulf

28 November 2016

Dear Mayor Paronella,

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT

With the current changes to the Bio Security Act, Etheridge Shire Council is actively engaging with Landholders, our neighboring Shire Councils and Transport and Main Roads for the effective and efficient management of declared weeds and pests. It is with great interest that we are observing the proactive efforts that the Tablelands Regional Council is dedicating towards managing the pest weed Navua sedge on roadsides and also supporting landholders by lobbying for more effective management options.

Etheridge Shire Council also suffers the impacts of this weed as well as others and can benefit from the efforts that your Council is taking. As such, I fully support the funding proposal that TRC is presenting to the State Government targeting pest weed Navua sedge.

I understand the funding proposal that Council is putting forward involves the implementation of two programs summarized as follows:

1. On-ground management and education on the Tablelands

The on-ground management program involves a three year chemical treatment regime using best practice methods including aligning with slashing regimes. The aim of the treatment program is to protect areas free of Navua sedge, eradicate it from valuable asset zones and high risk areas of spread and reduce chronic roadside infestations. The three year program will also include a community education program focusing on best on farm practice, weed seed hygiene and weed identification.

2. Research and development for a residual pre-emergent and long term management solutions

The research and development proposal includes an ethics based chemical pre-emergent trial and/or other management options, rainfast pot trials using 'Sempra', registration of chemical/s and a main roads spraying regime.

The funding proposal and learnings that are expected from this activity will directly benefit all Local Government Areas and constituents in Far North Queensland.

I strongly support the proactive work of Tablelands Regional Council in managing the pest weed Navua Sedge. The collaborative approach between the Local Government Authority and Community clearly demonstrates their commitment to eradicating a potentially serious bio-security risk.

Yours Sincerely,


Michael Kitzelmann
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



Tableland CANEGROWERS Ltd

28 November 2016

Re: Letter of Support for Funding to Implement Navua Sedge Programs

Dear Kirsty,

I am writing in support of the Tableland Regional Council application for State Government funding to target the pest weed Navua Sedge.

Tableland CANEGROWERS Ltd represents the interest of cane growers within the Tableland Regional Council area who are dealing with the impacts of weeds on farm while at the same time trying to reduce herbicide use in line with Reef Regulation requirements.

Tableland Regional Council has been proactive in controlling Navua Sedge along roadsides and our industry is keen to support them in lobbying for more effective long term management options.

I understand that the funding proposal involves the implementation of two programs:

1. An on-ground management program to eradicate Navua Sedge from valuable asset zones and high risk areas of spread as well as the protection of areas free of this pest weed. This includes a chemical and mechanical treatment regime as well as a community education program which is extremely important in helping to combat the spread of Navua Sedge.
2. A research and development program to trial chemical, biological and other long term management strategies.

Tableland CANEGROWERS looks forward to following the progress of the proposal and if successful, the implementation of the programs to control and eradicate this problematic pest weed.

If you require any further information or comment on our reasons of support as outlined above, I am contactable on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
Bronwyn Dwyer
Manager, Tableland CANEGROWERS Ltd



**Mareeba District Fruit and
Vegetable Growers Association Inc.**



29 November 2016



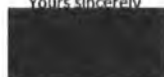
MAREEBA DISTRICT FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION INC

The Mareeba District Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association Inc, recognises the efforts of the Tablelands Regional Council, towards the management of the pest weed *Navua sedge*, on roadsides and also supporting landholders by lobbying for more effective management options. The Mareeba District Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association Inc represents growers who deal with the impacts of this weed and will benefit from the efforts that the Tablelands Regional Council is taking. As such, the Association fully supports the funding proposal that Council is presenting to the State Government targeting pest weed *Navua sedge*. The Association understands the funding proposal that Council is putting forward involves the implementation of two programs summarized as follows:

- 1. On-ground management and education on the Tablelands**
The on-ground management program involves a three year chemical treatment regime using best practice methods including aligning with slashing regimes. The aim of the treatment program is to protect areas free of *Navua sedge*, eradicate it from valuable asset zones and high risk areas of spread and reduce chronic roadside infestations. The three year program will also include a community education program focusing on best on farm practice, weed seed hygiene and weed identification.
- 2. Research and development for a residual pre-emergent and long term management solutions**
The research and development proposal includes an ethics based chemical pre-emergent trial, biological and/or other management options, rainfast pot trials using 'Sempra', registration of chemical/s and a main roads spraying regime.

The Association looks forward to hearing of progress with the proposal.

Yours sincerely



Joe Moro
PRESIDENT
MAREEBA DISTRICT FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION INC



Co-Operative Association Limited

Incorporated under the Co-Operative Association Act 1997

29th November 2016

Letter of Support

We are observing the efforts that Tablelands Regional Council is dedicating towards managing the pest weed Navua sedge on roadsides and also supporting landholders by lobbying for more effective management options.

The NQ Banana Growers Co-Operative Association Limited represents Banana Growers who deal with the impacts of this weed and will benefit from the efforts that your Council is taking. As such we fully support the funding proposal that TRC is presenting to the State Government targeting pest weed Navua sedge.

We understand the funding proposal that Council is putting forward involves the implementation of two programs summarized as follows:

1. On-ground management and education on the Tablelands
The on-ground management program involves a three year chemical treatment regime using best practice methods including aligning with slashing regimes. The aim of the treatment program is to protect areas free of Navua sedge, eradicate it from valuable asset zones and high risk areas of spread and reduce chronic roadside infestations. The three year program will also include a community education program focusing on best on farm practice, weed seed hygiene and weed identification.
2. Research and development for a residual pre-emergent and long term management solutions
The research and development proposal includes an ethics based chemical pre-emergent trial, biological and/or other management options, rain fast pot trial using 'Sempra', registration of chemical/s and a main roads spraying regime.

NQ Banana Growers Co-Operative Association Limited looks forward to hearing of progress with the proposal.

Yours sincerely



B Kanowski
Secretary
NQ Banana Growers Association Limited





Dear Sir/Madam

Malanda Beef Plan Group (MBPG): Navua Sedge Weed Threat

The MBPG is based on the southern Atherton tablelands in North Queensland. Our group represents 45 beef and dairy producers from the Malanda and the surrounding district. Broadly across our area (Tablelands and Wet Coast) there are 800 properties covering an area of 90,000 ha and running over 150, 000 cattle. Annual farm gate sales from this region are approximately \$41 M. We are a motivated group interested in promoting productivity, viability and sustainability. We are passionate about our businesses but at the same time we take ownership in looking after the environment, water quality and Great Barrier Reef Lagoon. All money raised by MBPG each year through our field days goes towards supporting youth in agriculture. We run wild dog baiting programs in conjunction with Tablelands Regional Council (TRC) and currently coordinate a Dung Beetle project with Terrain. The Dung Beetle project has several objectives including: (i) putting nutrients from cow pats under the ground for plant use (ii) reducing chemical and fertiliser usage (iii) reducing water and nutrient run off downstream and on to the reef, and (iv) reducing buffalo fly activity which is the main vector for 3-Day Sickness.

MBPG has been actively working Navua Sedge since 2007. With the assistance of others our main achievements in relation to Navua Sedge include:

- A risk assessment in conjunction with Biosecurity QLD (Steve Csurhes) in 2008 and again in 2011.
- Contacted Dr Wayne Vogler (Senior DAF Weed Scientist) in 2010 about mixes of chemicals farmers were trying on Navua Sedge. With our support Wayne carried out trails with Nufarm ultimately leading to the registration of Sempra.
- The production and printing of a colour weed brochure in 2014 for farmers and hobby landholders to identify local weeds.
- Meeting with the TRC Mayor and Councillors in 2014 about the problem with Navua Sedge seed being spread by slashers on roads and spreading into farm pastures. TRC have been proactive in spraying Navua Sedge on council roads and this program is on-going.
- Off label permit issued by Dr Bhula in 2014 for local authorities to use Sempra chemical on roadsides. MBPG also received assistance from Senator McDonald and Nufarm in relation to off label permits.
- Registration of Sempra to use in pastures by Nufarm in 2015

Our pasture-fed dairy and beef production systems are under considerable threat from Navua Sedge. Navua Sedge emerged as weed threat in the early 1970's in Cairns and has expanded rapidly and is now found from Ingham to Daintree/Mossman and on to the Atherton Tablelands. Navua Sedge is the most serious pasture weed we have encountered in the Wet Tropics grazing areas due to the following reasons: -

- It is not palatable for cattle
- Navua Sedge is very invasive and easily spread by tourists, cattle, machinery and water
- It is a prolific seeder (up to 250 viable seeds/seedhead)
- It produces seed that remains viable for over 10 years.

Nufarm has recently registered and released selective contact herbicides and wetting agents (Sempra and Banjo) for Navua Sedge. Sempra provides excellent knock-down results but we are fighting a losing battle without a residual agent to control future emergence of seedlings. Further research and development is essential to identify a pre-emergent herbicide for this serious weed. Research is also critical in understanding the ecology of Navua Sedge which may lead to new and more effective control methodologies.

The MBPG also sees the need for a closely coordinated approach across local councils and government agencies in the region. Government agencies must conduct producer education programs across the region concentrating on the identification of the problem, pasture/grazing management, herbicide programs and fertiliser use. Numerous new landholders have purchased severely infested properties in the district and are unaware they have inherited a costly lifetime job controlling Navua Sedge, which will also impact on the property's productivity. Representatives from our group are very keen to meet with Biosecurity and R&D staff to explore a long term long term and collaborative (including associated costs) approach to controlling Navua Sedge.

Yours Sincerely

Trevor Petersen
Malanda Beef Plan Group (Secretary)



Dear Councillor Ball,

Pest Management is of serious concern here on the Atherton Tablelands as you know. Having recently become aware of the extent of the problem through the Local Area Pest Management Plan we are greatly disturbed by the range of invasive weeds and animals that need to be managed. Being able to eradicate such problems needs considerable personnel and finances and we would like to support any applications the TRC makes to assist in their handling of these issues. The sooner it is tackled the less money will be needed to address the issues. Pests (plant and animal) spread quickly.

Navua sedge is a problem for farmers on the Tableland, severely limiting the productive pasture lands it is invading. It can be eradicated with persistent effort but needs at least two applications of the herbicide and current funding does not permit the follow up necessary. The problem will expand if not addressed.

Tourism accounts for 20% of the income for Tablelanders and the natural environment is the greatest asset we have. As volunteers in the TRC Visitors Information Centres we are very aware of the attraction of our local assets...the natural landscape and wildlife. The biodiversity of the Tablelands is under threat from numerous invasive species such as Stevia ovata which is limited in extent now and could be eradicated with a targeted program. Eradication of Miconia, Fireweed, Thungeria species and Giant sensitive weed is highly achievable if tackled promptly before they spread. Those that are spreading need an even greater effort for protection of our natural systems - Gamba and other grasses and weeds. Hymenachne, salvinia molesta and Cabomba caroliniana are all attacking our water drainages which exit in the waters off the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage site...protection of which is sort internationally, nationally and locally.

As landholders we make every effort we can to control environmental threats within our own property and on the public accesses within our home territory. We also

believe that all landholders should be encouraged to take action to help maintain the land and implement best practice.

The TRC Community Revegetation Nursery is one body that provides such support.

Additional suggestions and comments:

1. Education programmes on pest recognition and management methods.
2. Comprehensive lists of persons who help eradicate pigs for instance. Those who use bows and arrows or guns but no dogs.
3. Subsidised herbicide, fertiliser, ground improvement supplements, fencing materials through existing local suppliers.
4. Local citizens "adopt a right of way" or stretch of road to relieve the burden on council employees in return for TRC supplied herbicides
5. That the work of individual landholders be supported as well as community organisations. Many individuals are willing to put in effort on their own holdings and in some cases, surrounding areas, but are not engaged with groups for a variety of reasons. The process of getting support through groups is very bureaucratic. Much of the money is spent fulfilling criteria rather than on the ground. Guidelines often prevent good work being done outside their scope. It would allow for a greater diversity of programs. This may require some monitoring but it would be money well spent. Landholders would need to be accountable for support given.

Such suggestions would be difficult to implement with existing personnel and the financial support given Local Governments. State and Federal governments cannot keep divesting responsibility.

The Atherton Tablelands is not just the responsibility of local rate payers. Its agricultural land is amongst the richest in the nation but it suffers from the tyranny of distance. The Nation has recognised the need to develop its Northern Resources. Our region also comprises the bulk of Wet Tropics World Heritage and suffers because it is small in area so can be overlooked. It's significance outweighs its size. Waters that flow from it affect the Great Barrier Reef and feed potential development areas in Cape York Peninsular.

We thank you for your efforts on behalf of Pest Management, and hope we can help to assist in any way we can. Our personal efforts are primarily directed towards maintaining and improving the natural environment but we also support the efforts of those developing our agricultural resources in a sustainable manner.

Yours sincerely

Paul and Roberta Michna
Landholders in Topaz

Wabubadda Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC



18 May 2016



Dear Sir/Madam

Support for funding to manage obnoxious weed on country

The board has agreed to support Tableland Regional Council (TRC) for its initiative to manage the weed Navua Sedge which is a problem in Division 1, where a small part pertains to Jirrbal country.

Yours faithfully,



Desley Mosquito

From [REDACTED]

Sent: Monday, 13 June 2016 2:58 PM

[REDACTED]

Attached please find a copy of my letter of interest regarding navua sedge control, December 2015, as discussed.

As a contract herbicide sprayer, I have had a dramatic increase in calls from pastoral farmers in relation to Navua Sedge in the last 6-8 months. I feel a large part of this is as a result of the large scale flooding across the Tablelands in February 2015 dispersing seed aggregated along river banks into low lying paddocks.

In addition, I personally think Navua is reaching a tipping point where there is enough widespread infestation to start dramatically increasing in density and effect on pastures across the Tablelands.

I do not believe "Sempra" (halosulfuron methyl) is capable of eradicating the weed in one application, particularly due to it not being translocated efficiently to the underground rhizomes from which the plant re-shoots.

I would be in strong support of efforts to research more effective ways of combating this weed.

Regards,

Andrew Lilley
FNQ Weed Services
[REDACTED]

