

Media Release

Wednesday 18 March 2020 | Media contact: Casey Tomkins | 0437 541 697

Funding Boost to Tackle Invasive Weeds in the Far South West

Forest Fire Management Victoria's funding for pest plant management in forests and parks between Portland and Dergholm has been bolstered to \$1.1 million over the next two years.

Successful funding bids have added an extra \$377,000 funding for the Glenelg Eden and Glenelg Pines projects – two invasive pest plant management programs on public land.

Glenelg Eden works are helping eradicate invasive species across more than 100 infestation sites to improve habitat and biodiversity outcomes.

The additional funding expands this program and will deliver more targeted groundwork eradicating the environmental woody weed, Sweet Pittosporum in forests and parks around the Portland and Heywood areas.

Known as a transformer weed and not native to the area, Sweet Pittosporum invades bushland; quickly multiplying and crowding out native vegetation and lowering biodiversity values.

Now in its second year, the Glenelg Pines project is reducing pine wildling numbers in Stringybark woodlands, a critical habitat for the endangered South-eastern Red-tail Black Cockatoo.

To date, over 2,000 hectares have been treated, with this new funding expanding the scope of the project to treat another 1,000 hectares – an area larger than 1,000 MCGs.

Glenelg Pines and Glenelg Eden are funded by the Victorian State Government's Weeds and Pests on Public Land Initiative and Biodiversity Response Planning Initiative. The additional funding has been granted by the Good Neighbour Program and the Reducing Bushfire Risk Initiative to undertake weed and pest control projects across Victoria.

Quotes attributable to FFMVic Glenelg Eden Project Officer Mitch Williams:

"This new funding to target Sweet Pittosporum will allow us to make significant vegetation improvements to tall, lowland forests in the south of the district currently infested with this species."

"The significant investment highlights the impact of the species on the ground and in the community, and will provide multiple land management outcomes."

Quotes attributable to FFMVic Glenelg Pine Project Officer Katrina Shawcroft:

"The additional funding we've received will enable us to continue this valuable work to protect some of the state's most vulnerable species."

"Work that has been done to date shows the importance of our Stringybark woodlands and the value of their improvement for habitat resilience."