Strategic pest management: controlling and managing weeds and pests in the Mackay Whitsunday region (pond apple management)

Project summary

Proponent: Reef Catchments (Mackay Whitsunday Isaac) Ltd

Value: $48,661

Project duration: 1 October 2013 – 30 June 2016

Project description

This project will eradicate the weed pond apple from impacting on high quality agricultural land and environmental assets within the Mackay Whitsunday region. Pond apple presents a significant environmental threat to the region and is considered to be one of the highest priority pests under the Mackay Regional Pest Management Plan and state government legislation.

This project is on track to be the first pond apple infestation to be eradicated in Queensland. The project will maintain the control of the 15 hectares infestation of pond apple in the Reliance Creek Catchment. The successful eradication of this weed species will protect the important Reliance Creek estuary system and remove the economic threat to adjacent agricultural industries, particularly grazing and sugar cane production.

This project will be delivered through on-ground activities in conjunction with Mackay Regional Council and Pioneer Catchment and Landcare Group. This project will cover two sub-catchments—the Reliance Creek and the Pioneer River Catchments.

This project has been developed with the Mackay Regional Pest Management Group. The group will be critical in providing continual input into the projects delivery.

The project will undertake the following activities.

- Survey up to 40 hectares to identify the presence of pond apple germination infestations in Reliance Creek Catchment and the Pioneer River Catchment.
- Best Management Practice on-ground control undertaken of 15 hectares of pond apple.
- Train landholders to identify pond apple.
- Displays at regional shows and other events to build awareness of pond apple.
- Monitor treated germinated seedlings to ensure effectiveness of control measures.
Project outcomes

Long-term outcomes (5-10 years)

- Priority landscapes have improved resilience to weed and pest impacts.
- The condition, physical stability and resilience of the natural resource base for agriculture is protected and improved to secure and increase resource availability and productivity.
- The condition, physical stability and resilience of waterways, wetlands and the Great Barrier Reef lagoon is protected and maintained.

Intermediate outcomes (3-5 years)

- The detrimental economic, social and environmental impacts from weeds and pests are reduced.
- Prevent the establishment and spread of pond apple over 15 hectares.

Further information

For further information on the ‘Strategic pest management: controlling and managing weeds and pests in the Mackay Whitsunday region (pond apple management)’ project, please contact Reef Catchments (Mackay Whitsunday Isaac) Ltd.