

Declared Plant Policy

under the Natural Resources Management Act 2004



Government
of South Australia

water dropwort (*Oenanthe pimpinelloides*)

Water dropwort is a perennial that invades pastures on boggy clay soils. It is confined to the Meadows Creek in SA.

Management Plan for water dropwort

Outcomes

- Protect the productivity of pastures on heavy, poorly drained soils in the high-rainfall regions of the State.

Objectives

- Contain water dropwort within its present range.
- Minimise the impacts of water dropwort on pasture production.

Implementation

- Prevent movement of water dropwort seed on livestock or fodder from the infested areas.
- Management of water dropwort by owners of infested land.
- Routine surveillance and response to any incursions of water dropwort in other regions at risk.

Regional Implementation

Refer to regional management plans for further details.

NRM Region	Actions
Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges	Contain spread
Alinytjara Wilurara	Limited action
Eyre Peninsula	Contain spread - regional alert
Kangaroo Island	Monitor
Northern and Yorke	Limited action
South Australian Arid Lands	Limited action
South Australian Murray Darling Basin	Manage sites
South East	Contain spread - regional alert

Declaration

To implement this policy, water dropwort is declared under the *Natural Resources Management Act, 2004* throughout the whole of the State of South Australia so that movement of contaminated produce can be prevented. The movement or transport of the plant on a public road, by itself or as a contaminant, or the sale by itself or as a contaminant is

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prohibited. NRM authorities may require land owners to control water dropwort plants growing on their land. NRM authorities are required to control plants growing on road reserves and may recover costs from the adjoining land owners. Within the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges, Kangaroo Island, Northern and Yorke, SA Murray Darling Basin and South East NRM regions, notification of infestations is mandatory to ensure these are controlled.

Water dropwort is declared in category 3 under the Act for the purpose of setting maximum penalties and for other purposes. Any permit to allow its movement or sale can only be issued by the regional NRM Board pursuant to section 188. Under the *Natural Resources Management (General) Regulations 2005*, the transport or movement of grain for milling or wool for cleaning is exempt from the operation of sections 175 and the sale of wool or grain is exempt from section 177(2) if at the time of the sale the person believes on reasonable grounds that the purchaser will remove the plant from the wool or grain before any re-sale.

The following sections of the Act apply to water dropwort throughout each of the NRM regions noted below:

Sections of Act	Region							
	AMLR	AW	EP	KI	NY	SAAL	SAMDB	SE
175(1) Prohibiting entry to area								
175(2) Prohibiting movement on public roads	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
177(1) Prohibiting sale of the plant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
177(2) Prohibiting sale of contaminated goods	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
180 Requiring notification of infestations	X			X	X		X	X
182(1) Landowners to destroy the plant on their properties								
182(2) Landowners to control the plant on their properties	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
185 Recovery of control costs on adjoining road reserves	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Review

This policy is to be reviewed by 2020, or in the event of a change in one or more regional management plans for water dropwort.

Weed Risk

Invasiveness

Water dropwort spreads as seeds, which may be carried on animals or water and as a contaminant in hay. It has relatively low seed set, and probably flowers in its second year.

Impacts

Livestock do not usually graze on water dropwort and it has been reported to be poisonous.

It causes a minor reduction in pasture production, but dense stands of water dropwort are often a response to low pasture density on problematical sites rather than its cause. The problem at Meadows is due largely to uncompetitive pastures, which are dominated by volunteer species with a short growing season such as strawberry clover. These plants do not fully use the resources of the site and so leave a vacant niche for water dropwort.

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Water dropwort may have more significant impacts if it is ever established in irrigated pastures.

Potential distribution

Water dropwort infestations are limited to heavy clays along streams in high rainfall. It might be expected to establish in similar habitats in the Eyre Peninsula, Kangaroo Island, Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges, SA Murray Darling Basin and South East regions.

Feasibility of Containment

Control costs

There are no registered chemicals to control water dropwort in South Australia. Research has indicated that many common herbicides that target a wide spectrum of broadleaf weeds may be useful in controlling spot infestations. However, these chemicals could be harmful to useful pasture species and are unsuitable for use around watercourses.

The solution for the infested pastures around Meadows is pasture renovation with a perennial grass such as phalaris and white or subterranean clover. Competition from perennial grasses reduces seedling survival, therefore maintaining a dense pasture is an effective management strategy. Effective grazing by sheep in winter improves density through tillering of the phalaris and clover, but cattle may bare the ground by pugging, giving water dropwort seedlings sites to establish.

Persistence

A large proportion of the population each spring consists of seedlings: this may imply that individual plants are short-lived and seedling recruitment is necessary to maintain their density.

Current distribution

Within SA, water dropwort is restricted to seasonally flooded land fringing the Meadows Creek. It has also been found in similar habitats in Victoria.

State Level Risk Assessment

Assessment using the Biosecurity SA Weed Risk Management System gave the following comparative weed risk and feasibility of containment scores by land use:

Land use	Weed Risk	Feasibility of control	Response at State Level
Grazing - southern	low 17	very high 2	monitor
Irrigated pastures	medium 67	very high 2	contain spread

Considerations

Water dropwort causes a specific problem a localised and restricted habitat. Risk assessment at State level indicates monitoring in southern grazing lands, and containing spread to prevent it establishing in irrigated pastures.

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Regional management plans vary according to regional habitats and presence of the weed. Spread from the established populations is contained in the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges. The Eyre Peninsula and South East NRM Boards aim to contain spread by preventing entry to their regions and treat water dropwort as an alert weed. The Kangaroo Island NRM Board monitors for any incursion of water dropwort, and the South Australian Murray Darling Basin manages the sites of infestations. Only limited action is required in the Alinytjara Wilurara, South Australian Arid Lands, and Northern and Yorke regions where there are no suitable habitats.

Synonymy

Oenanthe pimpinelloides L., Sp. Pl. 1: 255 (1753).

Hon Ian Hunter MP
Minister for Sustainability, Environment and
Conservation

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