The Minister for Land Resource Management; Gary Higgins, has today announced the release of the new statutory Weed Management Plan for Grader Grass (*Themeda quadrivalvis*).

This announcement follows a four week public consultation period and consideration by the Northern Territory Weed Advisory Committee and Regional Weed Reference Groups.

The Plan sets out the management actions required by all persons, to manage grader grass and to mitigate the significant economic and environmental impacts of grader grass infestations in the NT.

Director of the Weed Management Branch, Geraldine Lee, said it was great news the plan had been approved as it sets a strategic way forward to manage this invasive weed.

“It also initiates a proactive approach to control, monitoring and spread prevention to help protect our natural resources from the impacts of this weed,” she said.

“Following the four weeks of consultation, we assessed and considered all comments received and are extremely happy with the plan going forward.

“We are committed to protecting our natural ecosystems as well as the pastoral and agricultural industries from this invasive weed and the release of this plan is a step in the right direction.

“A huge area of northern Australia is susceptible to grader grass invasion, including ecologically and economically important areas of the Northern Territory.

“Eradication of small isolated infestations can be achieved when grader grass is located and controlled prior to seed set with follow-up monitoring and management. Once grader grass becomes established, the investment required to control or contain it increases significantly.

“Grader grass is widespread throughout the Katherine region and presents significant management challenges on a range of land tenures. Preventing the spread of this weed into areas that are currently free of grader grass is a high priority.”

Grader grass is very invasive and can out-compete native vegetation, leading to reductions in pastoral productivity and reduced biodiversity. It is often confused with a native desirable perennial species, kangaroo grass.

Grader grass seed can be spread by machinery contaminated with seeds. This predominately occurs where slashers and graders operate, however it can also be spread by contaminated fill, gravel and hay.

“The implementation of the Management Plan will continue to help increase stakeholders’ awareness of their legislative obligations. “
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