

Blue Mountains Conservation Society Inc



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Nature Conservation Saves for Tomorrow

Mr Josh Murray
Secretary
Transport for NSW

PO Box K659, Haymarket NSW 1240

12/06/2024

Dear Mr Murray,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Blue Mountains Conservation Society. The Blue Mountains Conservation Society (the Society) is a community-based volunteer organisation comprised of approximately 850 members. The Society's mission is to help protect, conserve and advocate for the natural environment of the Greater Blue Mountains. The Society takes a keen interest in the management of local ecosystems and bushland, and degrading influences, particularly the management of weeds.

As you are aware, the Transport for NSW highway and railway corridor that crosses the Blue Mountains has close proximity to Blue Mountains National Park and the internationally significant World Heritage Area. The corridor has potential to serve as habitat for weed species, and as a distribution corridor for weed seed.

Many sections of the Blue Mountains transport corridor display appropriate growth of locally indigenous plants. The Society is appreciative of Transport for NSW's efforts to utilise and maintain indigenous plant species along the corridor. The Society is aware that Transport for NSW vegetation management guides, such as *Vegetation Management in the Corridor Guide EMS-06-GD-0067*, promote the need for appropriate management of indigenous vegetation and weeds.

However, the Society is concerned that extensive sections of the Blue Mountains' transport corridor, especially the rail corridor, are overrun with weeds. As well as being unattractive, and effectively undoing all of the positive vegetation management work that your organisation undertakes, weeds such as Broom (various species), Blackberry and Pampas Grass have potential to invade streams and protected ecological communities, as well as other sensitive ecosystems.

For example, approximately 200 metres west of Lawson railway station, Broom and Pampas Grass growing on the northern railway embankment and in an adjacent Transport for NSW sediment detention basin, Lendster Street, are now spreading into a protected ecological community, Blue Mountains Swamp, and threaten the headwaters of a significant tributary of Blue Mountain Creek (see illustration). This stream flows to Blue Mountains National Park and the World Heritage Area. Such has been the Society's concern about this particular

matter that it has referred it to the Department of Primary Industry (NSW).



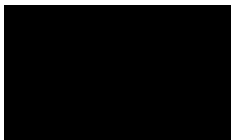
Broom, transport corridor, Lawson, Blue Mountains 2024

State government departments, such as Transport for NSW, have a responsibility under the *Biosecurity Act 2015* (NSW) to effectively manage biosecurity threats, including weeds. The Society therefore requests that Transport for NSW devise a publicly available vegetation management plan (VMT) and weed management strategy for its Blue Mountains transport corridor, with particular emphasis on identifying sections of the corridor that pose a biosecurity threat to sensitive ecosystems, such as streams and protected ecological communities. The Society believes that management of the biosecurity threat at north Lawson, and similar threats to protected ecological communities, should be prioritised. Public availability of the VMT would enable the Society and other local environmental groups, such as volunteer Catchment Groups, to offer constructive feedback on Blue Mountains transport corridor vegetation management.

The Society would be pleased to answer any enquiries concerning this matter, and looks forward to receiving your responses to the Society's proposals. If you have any questions in regard to this letter, please contact me on email at president@bluemountains.org.au

Yours sincerely,

Annette Cam



President
Blue Mountains Conservation Society