

Monday, 25 January 2010

Work team drive weeds out of golf course

It's 'game over' for the Sydney Golden Wattle at the Grove Park Public Golf Links course in Little Grove this week as South Coast NRM's work team start removing and spraying the invasive weed.

The work team of six men and women is spending four days at the privately-owned property removing the wattle and infestations of Taylorina and Arum Lilly on the outskirts of the course.

Established by South Coast NRM and PVS Workfind last year, the aim of the work team program is to provide meaningful employment and training in natural resource management to the unemployed while also providing additional capacity to project partners.

Grove Park owner and manager John Harvey said the wattle was not a problem when he first arrived 13 years ago, but the weed had since overrun the 100 hectare course and large swathes of the Torndirrup National Park.

"We've had help from the City of Albany and the South Coast Progress Association in the past to remove the wattle but it just keeps coming back. South Coast NRM is doing an excellent job at the moment working in an uncleared area with wattles up to 10 metres high," he said.

If seeds reappear in future, Mr Harvey said it would be easy for him to control them through diesel spraying and ground burning.

South Coast NRM Area Leader West and Work Team Coordinator David Broadhurst said he was very impressed with the progress of the team and was pleased that South Coast NRM could offer real pathways into an NRM career.

Among its many achievements, the team has restored a 200 metre walking track on Mt Clarence; fenced kilometres of remnant vegetation in Denmark, Torbay and Mount Barker; and weeded and revegetated large areas of land around the Kalgan River, Mount Many Peaks, Porongurup Range National Park and several City of Albany road reserves.

"The program has been fantastic. The work team has completed a Senior First Aid certificate, ChemCert and chainsaw handling and maintenance training, and in the future we hope to offer them more training and opportunities to gain full-time employment with South Coast NRM," he said.

"Special thanks to PVS Workfind for its continued support and Greening Australia WA for providing two 4WD vehicles for the team to use."

For more information about the program, please contact David Broadhurst on (08) 9845 8537.

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South Coast Natural Resource Management Inc. is the leading regional group for natural resource management on the South Coast of Western Australia. As an independent non-profit organisation, we work with the community to improve the environment by preserving and protecting unique plants and animals, managing land and waterways, and sharing knowledge and skills in natural resource management.