

# Productive Grazing, Healthy Rivers

## Module 4: Riparian weed management tool

N. Ainsworth

### **Why look at weed management in riparian zones?**

Weed management was consistently rated by stakeholders as a major issue for riparian land management. In particular, concern that a weed problem would develop was often cited as a reason for not permanently fencing stock out of the riparian zone. Some of this concern is well founded, but to some extent it results from landholders having much less knowledge or understanding of weed management in a riparian zone managed for biodiversity than they do of weeds in pasture.

### **What did we do?**

The aim of this module was to develop weed management guidelines that would provide grazing industry farmers with region-specific tools to assist them with weed management in riparian zones. Development of these guidelines did not involve the generation of new research information, rather it assembled and evaluated existing knowledge and applied it to riparian situations on intensive grazing properties. Extensive consultation with the Productive Grazing, Healthy Rivers project Technical Reference Groups in Gippsland and south west Victoria contributed to creating the guidelines 'Weed Management in Riparian Zones' by providing the region-specific information and contacts required. Two publications were produced (one version for south west Victoria and one for Gippsland). These documents assist land managers to manage riparian weeds by providing them with relevant information, sources for further advice, some specific management recommendations and, most importantly, a process by which to develop and monitor a riparian weed management plan.

### **Status of this Module**

#### *Complete*

This module was completed in October 2004 with the publication of the last weed management guideline. The guidelines are freely available on the project website. Documented feedback indicates that the weed management guides have been well received by industry and natural resource management agencies. Providing a publication that was both industry and region-specific was well received as it addresses the concern of some landholders that more general weed management advice does not sufficiently take account of their particular circumstances.

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### How to use the weed management in riparian zones guide

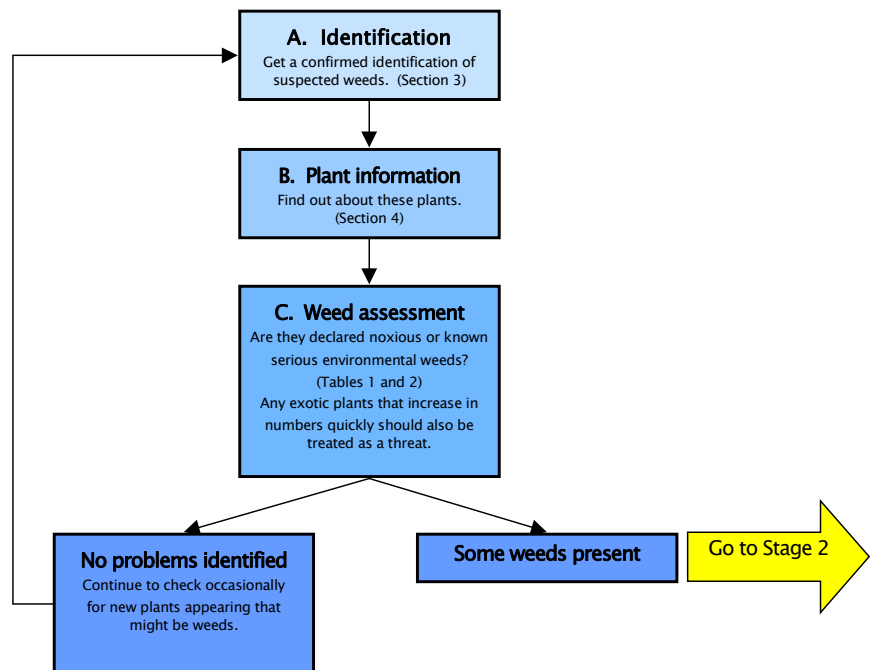
The weed management guide is based around the four flow charts shown below, which are cross-referenced to relevant sections of the guide providing information and advice. By following the flowcharts users are able to assess whether a weed problem exists, set goals for weed management, review control options, plan any weed management that is required and make changes when necessary.

### Stage 1 – Decide whether there is a weed problem.

#### Stage 1:

The first step is to determine if you have a weed problem. Identification of the weeds present is essential. Without identification you may be killing a protected native species.

What type of weed is it? Is it an environmental weed, a declared noxious weed or an agricultural weed? You may be required to control some weeds because they are declared noxious.

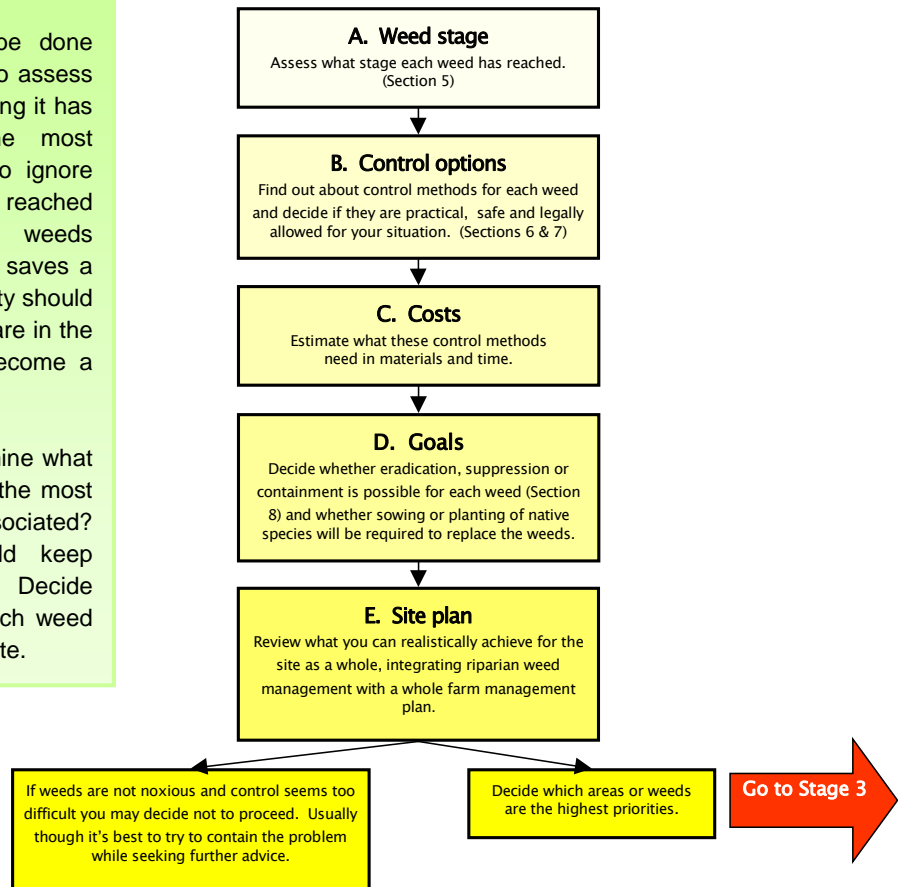


## Stage 2 – Set goals for weed management.

### Stage 2:

Before deciding what can be done about a weed it is important to assess how much there is and how long it has been present. One of the most frequent mistakes made is to ignore new weeds until they have reached large numbers. Controlling weeds before they become common saves a lot of effort later. Highest priority should go to maintaining places that are in the best condition before they become a bigger problem.

The next decision is to determine what control options are available, the most practical and the costs associated? The method chosen should keep disturbance to a minimum. Decide what is a realistic goal for each weed and review this for the entire site.

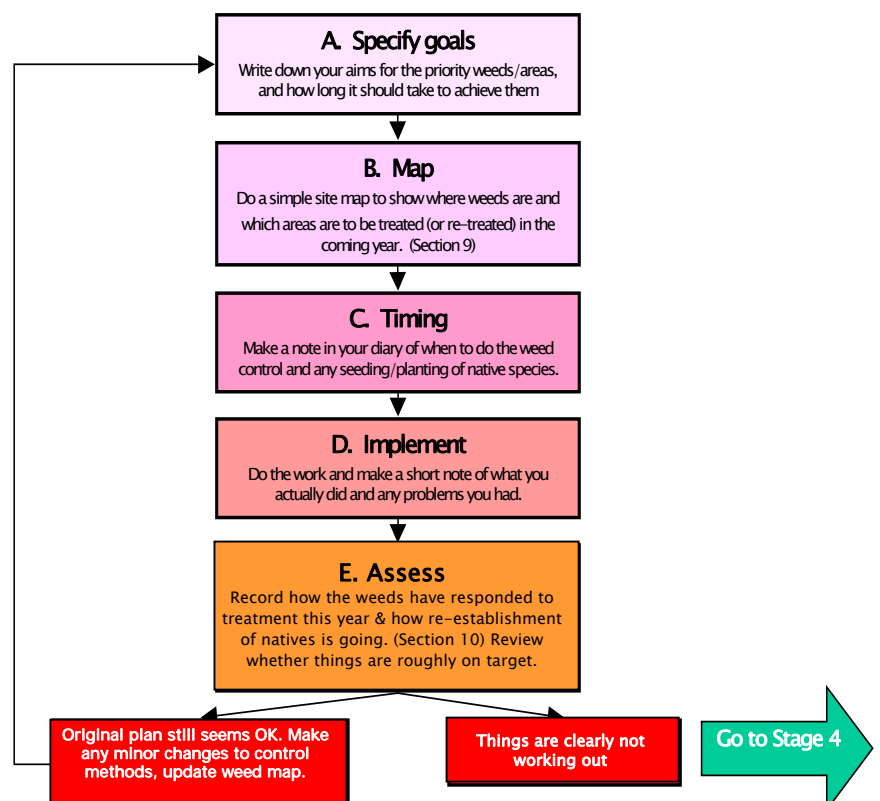


## Stage 3 – Implement and monitor weed management.

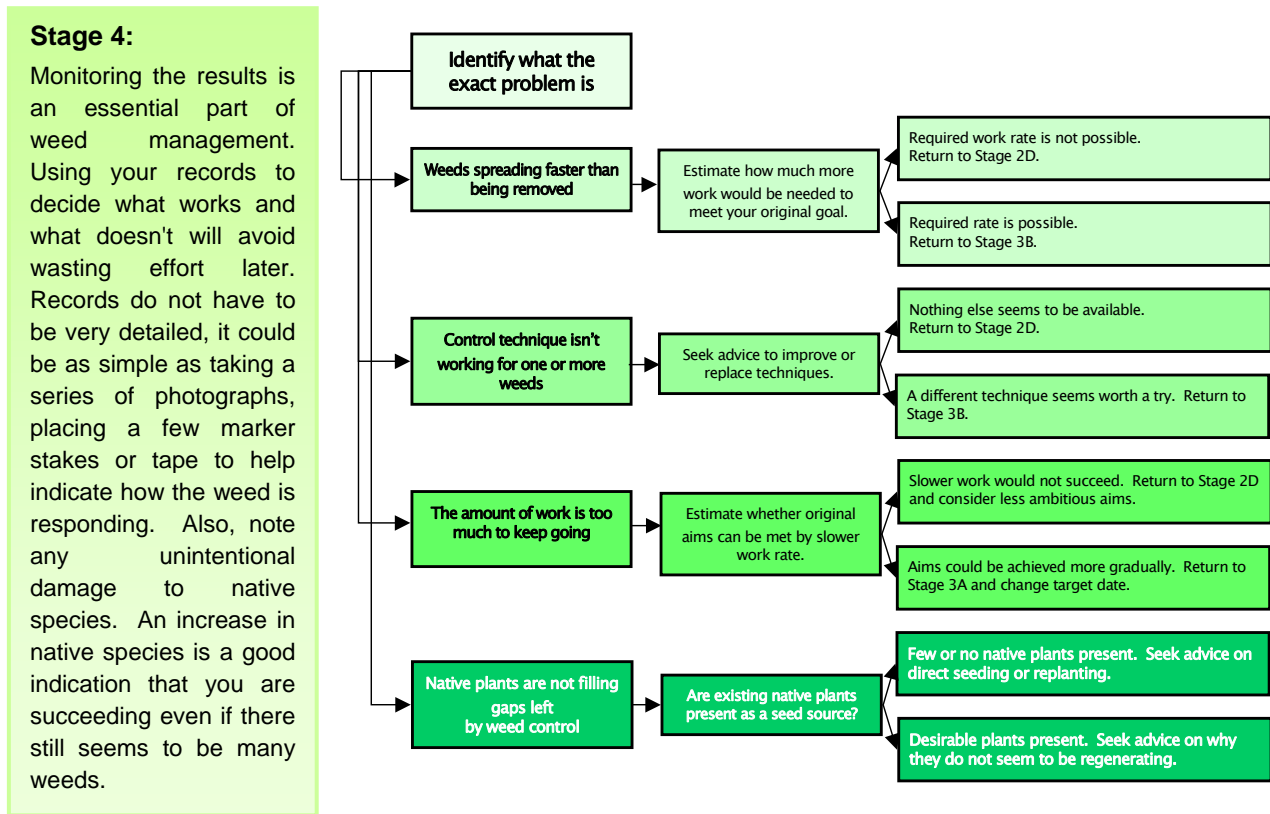
### Stage 3:

A realistic aim and timescale for your weed management is important. Developing a simple site plan (a rough map of the riparian zone with the location of weeds, reasons why weeds are a priority and aims) will make it easier to update and monitor in the future.

Now you can start to implement your plan. Make a note of how the control option went and assess how the weeds responded to treatment.

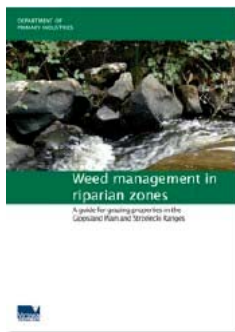


Stage 4 – Adapt if things don't work out.



Where can you find the guide for weed management in riparian zones?

[www.dpi.vic.gov.au/vro/biodiversity/riparian](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au/vro/biodiversity/riparian)



DPI 2004. Weed management in riparian zones: A guide for grazing properties in the Gippsland and Strzelecki Ranges, Department of Primary Industries, Frankston, Victoria.



DPI 2004. Weed management in riparian zones: A guide for grazing properties in southwest Victoria, Department of Primary Industries, Frankston, Victoria.

**Useful weed identification books...**

Blood, K. 2001. *Environmental Weeds: A Field Guide for SE Australia*, Cooperative Research Centre for Weed Management Systems (Weeds CRC), Jerram Science Publishers.

Muyt, A. 2001. *Bush Invaders of South-east Australia*, R.G & F.J Richardson.