

King and Yolande Sustainability Review

Outcomes and commitments

Biodiversity

Sustainability reviews provide Hydro Tasmania with the opportunity to evaluate the impacts of our hydropower operations in the catchments we operate in. Based on our information review and community consultation we undertook specific studies on weeds and crayfish. The outcomes and commitments regarding biodiversity within the King and Yolande catchments are presented below.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity is important to the West Coast community and supports activities such as bushwalking, experiencing nature, tourism, bird watching and land conservation.

In the community consultation we undertook in 2019, weed management was listed as the highest concern, followed closely by threatened species management. In response, two technical studies were undertaken to:

- understand the potential presence and distribution of a threatened crayfish in the Lake Burbury catchment; and
- review priority weed areas in the catchments and identify collaboration opportunities.

Crayfish survey

The freshwater crayfish (*Omarastacoides parvicaudatus*) is listed as critically endangered on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of Threatened Species.

It is not currently state or nationally listed as a threatened species, however, historic records exist for the King River valley. Flooding of Lake Burbury in the early 1990s resulted in some impact to its known habitat. The status of the species has remained unknown since this time and was presumed by some to be extinct.

Study aim

As part of the Sustainability Review, we undertook a survey in November 2020 to determine the status of this species in the western streams that flow into Lake Burbury.

Outcome

The study located 6 individuals residing in 2 creeks flowing off Mt Lyell. One was an egg-carrying female which indicates the population is able to support itself through reproduction. Whilst we have confirmed the species is not extinct, it appears its range is very limited. 10 sites were sampled in total.

Each individual was recorded well above lake operating levels, so our current operations will not affect the species.

Commitment

Suitable habitat has been identified in some adjacent, inflowing creeks. We have committed to undertake a further survey of these areas in May 2021 to work out how far and wide the species is found.



Lake Burbury: Short-tailed rain crayfish (source: N.Doran)

Weed management

Hydro Tasmania undertakes weed management on the land we own and manage as part of our Weed Management Program.

A number of weeds have been recorded in the King and Yolande catchments. Weeds declared under the *Weed Management Act 1999* include Elisha's tears, blackberry, gorse, broom, pampas grass, goat willow, ragwort and Spanish heath. A number of environmental weeds also occur in the area. The majority of weeds occur on roadsides.

We take weed management on our land seriously. Hydro Tasmania contributes to implementing the West Coast Weed Management Group's Weed Strategy 2018-2023 (the Weed Strategy), however, keeping up to date with priority weed locations and collaboration opportunities with other land holders is key to effective weed management.

Study aim

As part of the Sustainability Review we undertook fieldwork to map priority weeds, undertake targeted weed control work and identify opportunities to collaborate with landholders in weed management activities.



Environmental weed: Golden everlasting (*Xerochrysum bracteatum*), Mount Jukes Road

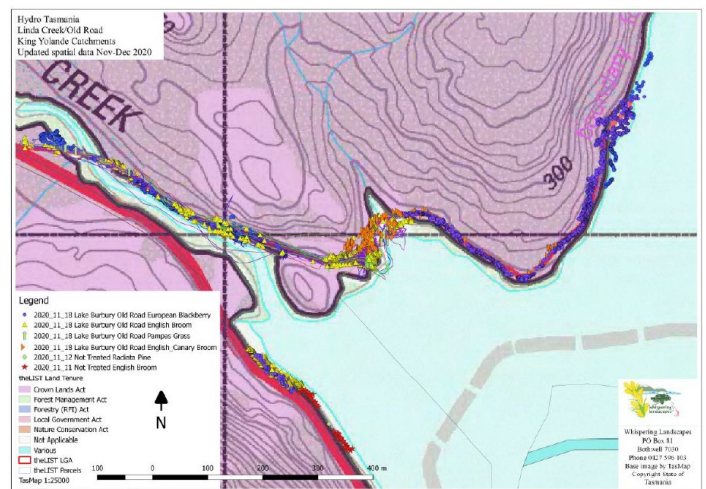
Outcome

We undertook a program of weed survey and treatment for priority weeds between 2019 and 2020 on land we manage in the King and Yolande catchments. Areas of focus included: Lake Burbury shoreline; Lynchford; Mt Jukes Rd; John Butters Power Station; Darwin and Crotty dams; and Lake Margaret village.

Collaboration opportunities with the Department of State Growth, West Coast Council and Parks and Wildlife Service have also been identified.

A mix of declared and environmental weeds were targeted including: Gorse, English broom, Californian thistle, spear thistle, Spanish heath, great mullein, twiggly mullein, pampas grass, Himalayan honeysuckle and European blackberry.

Revised weed location and weed treatment mapping has been incorporated into our spatial data management systems and provided to relevant government agencies to update records.



Revised weed mapping: Linda Creek, Lake Burbury

Commitment

Our weed management program will continue to target declared weeds on Hydro Tasmania land. We will continue to target weeds in line with the West Coast Weed Strategy and collaborate with and support other state-wide weed programs.

We will also look to improve collaboration in weed management on the West Coast amongst major land managers and target on-ground priorities.

We will continue to work with contractors to explore the feasibility of managing weeds in inaccessible areas using specialised drones and other new technologies.

Contact us

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