

## MANAGEMENT PLAN

For

### Prickly Pear

(*Opuntia* species except *O. ficus-indica*)

#### BACKGROUND

**Description:** The *Opuntia* species are commonly known as 'Prickly Pears', all have been introduced to Australia (mainly as ornamentals), where they have become naturalised. They are classed as shrubs, being 1-3 m in height, they reproduce from seed and branch fragments. They can form dense, impenetrable thickets if uncontrolled. The introduction of the control insects, Cactoblastis and Cochineal, has proven to be the most successful biological control agents in Australia.

**Declaration:** The *Opuntia* species are classified as a Class 4 noxious weed in the Tamworth Regional Council area.

Under the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993* as amended:

- The control objective of Class 4 noxious weeds is that they must be managed in such a manner as to 'minimise the negative impact of the weed on the economy, community or the environment of New South Wales'.
- The growth and spread of the plant must be controlled according to the measures specified in a Management Plan published by Tamworth Regional Council.
- The plant may not be sold, propagated or knowingly distributed.

#### CONTROL MEASURES

Tamworth Regional Council will control the *Opuntia* species on lands for which it has the responsibility to control weeds under the *Noxious Weeds Act 1993*.

Owners/Occupiers of land are required to actively control the *Opuntia* species. This means to prevent the *Opuntia* species from spreading and to reduce the numbers of infestations and their density. All or any of the following control methods must be used to achieve *Opuntia* species control.

#### CONTROL METHODS

**Chemical:** The *Opuntia* species is to be treated with a registered herbicide developed for this purpose. The product is to be used according to the product label.

**Mechanical:** The *Opuntia* species is to be physically removed or buried.

**Biological:** A suitable control agent is to be placed on or in close proximity to healthy *Opuntia* plants and encouraged to establish.