



MEDIA RELEASE

Cabomba Update

Phase two of the Cabomba eradication program will commence in the vicinity of Reedbeds Road at Darwin River on Monday.

The aim is to eradicate *Cabomba caroliniana*, otherwise known as fanwort, after dry season surveys revealed the aquatic weed was still present at Darwin River.

The weed was first detected in October last year and initial use of herbicide was successful in destroying Cabomba plants without affecting off target plants or animals.

However, the plants have since been discovered to have set viable seeds that germinated into new plants. This discovery is the first record of Cabomba setting seed in Australia.

Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts Natural Resources Management Division Senior Director Brent Williams said spraying Darwin River in the vicinity of Reedbeds Road with herbicide remained the most effective cause of action at this stage.

“If we don’t spray now this will produce more seeds so we are hoping to contain Cabomba seed set by eradicating as many plants as possible,” Mr Williams said.

“We will commence spraying from Monday and evaluate our efforts next month to see what the localised and downstream effects are.

“Teams of weeds officers working in boats on the river will use an underwater boom spray mechanism that is attached to the boat’s front to apply the herbicide to Cabomba.

“The boom spray is 1.5 metres wide and is the same mechanism used last wet season and we expect to start seeing results within 24-48 hours of its application.”

Mr Williams said Darwin River between Cox Peninsula Road and Leonino Road remained under a two-year quarantine until November next year.

“This quarantine includes drawing water from the river, fishing or entering the water and extends five metres from the water’s edge onto the river’s bank,” he said.

“Quarantine signs have been put in place along the areas effected and must be adhered to with individuals breaching the quarantine restriction facing a possible fine of up to \$50,000.

“The quarantine order does not prevent persons holding appropriate water drawing licences from pumping water from the river.”

Mr Williams said Darwin River Dam, which supplies most of Darwin’s drinking water, was not effected by Cabomba and would not be effected by the herbicide spraying.

He said spraying is being combined with the placement of a shade cloth over other populations of Cabomba in Darwin River to reduce the amount of sun reaching Cabomba plants and limit the seed being produced.

Cabomba is a fully-submerged aquatic plant native to the south-eastern regions of the United States and was first discovered in Australia about 40 years ago. It can grow to a depth of 10m and is listed as one of Australia's 20 Weeds of National Significance.

More information on Cabomba can be found at www.cabomba.nt.gov.au or by calling 89998954.

Ends

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