



MEDIA RELEASE

Eyes Opened at Mimosa Field Day

The detrimental impacts of *Mimosa pigra* on Top End Aboriginal communities were discussed at a recent field day 30km south of the Daly River where large infestations of mimosa occur.

The Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts (NRETA) and the Northern Land Council (NLC) organised the joint field day earlier this month aimed at communities with relatively small infestations of mimosa.

Rangers from the Tiwi Islands, Croker Island, Maningrida and Wadeye, joined local rangers from Peppimenarti and Wudikapildiyerr at the open day.

NLC Chairman John Daly said the field day was about opening the eyes of the visiting Traditional Owners to the threat of *Mimosa* because it is vital to combat it while its distribution is small.

“While there has been a great deal of work done by Traditional Owners and Indigenous rangers controlling small outbreaks, there is always a risk of becoming complacent, which is one of the key messages we wanted to get across,” Mr Daly said.

NRETA Regional Weeds Officer Michael Schmid said *Mimosa* is a Weed of National Significance (WONS) and is regarded as one of the worst weeds in Australia because of its invasiveness, potential for spread and economic and environmental impacts.

Mr Schmid said the purpose of the field day was to explain to landholders the damage *Mimosa* can do and that while effective control has occurred, there was still more to do.

He said under the NT Weeds Management Act, it is the landholder’s responsibility to manage *Mimosa* and stop it from spreading.

“The NRETA Weed Management Branch assists 12 Aboriginal ranger groups with planning and technical advice for *Mimosa* control and manage funds from the Indigenous Land Corporation (ILC) and the Australian Government’s Defeating the Weed Menace Program,” Mr Schmid said.

“Together with the ILC and NLC, we are committed to working together with Indigenous landholders to at least control, if not eradicate, this invasive weed from their land.

“Across the Top End we are taking a collaborative approach with different landholders, such as government, the pastoral industry and private landholders focusing on strategic management to prevent mimosa spreading and negatively impacting on the land and lifestyle.”

One of the key messages shared with landholders was that *Mimosa* prevents people with a right to hunt and access sacred sites from being able to enjoy such activities, so it's very much an impediment on lifestyle and culture.

"*Mimosa* also blocks waterways, restricts natural water flow and out-competes natural grasses," Mr Daly said.

"Water flow is vital for river systems to reduce salinity levels and acts as a natural flushing mechanism."

Ends

Media Note – For more information contact Michael Schmid (NRETA) on 8999 4554 or Barry Clarke (NLC) on 8920 5114

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