

2011/12 COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROJECT GUIDELINES

The Victorian Gorse Taskforce (VGT) with the support of the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) is seeking project proposals from community-based organisations. The VGT will consider funding projects that can demonstrate delivery of the goals of the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy (VGCS) and a community-led commitment to long-term gorse control.

In 2011/12 the VGT will consider projects under the following categories:

1. Small Grants Program
2. Facilitated Projects

SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM

This program is designed so that smaller community based groups can be empowered to implement key gorse control projects in Victoria. The VGT understands that many smaller groups do not have the capacity or the need to seek employment of a person resource. These projects shall be designed to run with minimal facilitation. A local contact needs to be available to complete the minor project administration requirements. The small grants program in 2011/12 can provide up to \$5,000 (GST exclusive) to support community-led projects.

Proponents need to ensure that their project will meet these circumstances:

- The landholders proposed to be involved in the project will complete the gorse control work voluntarily once they are made aware of the project.
- Persons submitting the proposal need to ensure that some admin time is dedicated to the project. This means that a member of your organisation will need to be available to notify landholders in the project area of the requirements for the project, to estimate the initial size of the gorse infestations and estimate the area treated as a result of the project.
- As previously mentioned these grants are for projects where minimal facilitation effort is required. It is expected that the majority of landholders in the project area will already possess the knowledge required to successfully implement their gorse control program so will require little support to achieve the result required. The main activity for these projects is likely to be the distribution of gorse control incentives to private land managers.
- The “Priority Areas for all VGT Supported Projects” and the “General Conditions” listed below also apply to these projects.

FACILITATED PROJECTS

The VGT will consider supporting projects where a paid person resource is used to deliver extension programs to landholders.

The VGT will provide funding so that paid person resources can co-ordinate education and treatment extension programs for gorse control projects.

Funding may be provided to (in order of VGT preference):

- Supplement existing staff wages (e.g. Landcare Coordinator) so that they can deliver gorse control education and treatment programs.
- Employ a new part-time person with the appropriate skills through the applicant organisation.
- Engage an external contractor or consultant with an Australian Business Number, insurances, etc to deliver services for the project.

Facilitation staff should be engaged to perform the:

- Gorse control education components of a given project.
- Collection of relevant reporting data required by the VGT.
- Collection of sufficient landholder information so that any recalcitrant landholders can be easily referred to DPI for regulatory enforcement (subject to available resources).

- Negotiation of appropriate time frames for gorse control with land managers.

If project proposals from similar geographic areas are received the VGT may choose to alter these so person resources can be shared across these areas. **This will be a consultative process between the VGT and the proponent.**

The use of the Gorse National Best Practice Manual to form the basis of gorse control advice is encouraged. Project proponents should familiarise themselves with the content of this manual.

If finding an appropriate person resource to facilitate gorse control is of concern for your project please call the VGT Executive Officer on 03 5336 6844 to discuss.

PRIORITY AREAS FOR ALL VGT SUPPORTED PROJECTS

Funding for projects is limited therefore the VGT will place priority on projects that deliver in the following areas:

- Treating isolated infestations (see distribution map, page 7 of the VGCS). Isolated infestations can be defined as populations of gorse arising as a result of spread from the core infestation (see core infestation description below). These populations are located outside of the areas mapped as Containment Zone (see page 5 VGCS). Projects that deliver results in this area are categorised as **'isolated infestations'** in the project application form.
- Containing the 'core' gorse infestation in the state. The core infestation for the purposes of this process can be generally described as a large geographic area where the plant is well established (see distribution map, page 7 of the VGCS). Projects that deliver in this area should be located on the perimeter or edges of the Containment Zone as detailed in the VGCS (see map, page 5). Categorised as **'containment'** in the project application form.
- Activities within the 'core' infestation that can demonstrate a reduction of the impacts of gorse upon key public assets as defined by the appropriate Catchment Management Authority. Categorised as **'asset protection'** in the project application form.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

- Grants under this program are available only to Victorian incorporated community group organisations (joint applications are encouraged).
- Grants will be paid in two instalments – 90% at the commencement of the project and the remainder on submission and approval of a Project Completion Report.
- Projects should include a comprehensive extension and awareness component (small grants program excepted).
- Successful applicants will be required to sign a project and financial agreement form.
- The VGT encourages submissions jointly from geographically close by community groups so that person resources can be combined.
- The VGT is not seeking to directly fund works on publicly managed land. These activities can be a part an overall project; however funds from this program must not be used to directly support on-ground control activities.
- It is important that all participants in the project are made aware of the importance of follow-up control works following the life of the project. These participants (landholders) need to agree to complete the necessary follow-up control at their own expense. Funds from the VGT will not be available for follow-up control works.

On completion of the project a Project Completion Report must be submitted detailing activities undertaken and costs incurred. A template for the Project Completion Report will be available from the VGT.

ELIGIBILITY

Project applications must:

- Be able to be completed by 30 June 2012.
- Be from an incorporated, non-profit community group.
- Demonstrate clear links to the goals and strategies listed within the Victorian Gorse Control Strategy 2008 – 2013.
- Should include an extension and awareness program.
- State a commitment to collect relevant data on the project's achievements.
- Pass on the data collected at least every 6 months (from the time of project approval) or as requested by the VGT Executive Officer.
- Promote and distribute best management practice information for gorse control.
- Be for works on private land or licensed public land.
- Incorporate a specific action plan with achievable objectives and measurable targets.
- Ensure a matching contribution of at least \$1:\$1 for on-ground landholder incentives. This must be a monetary contribution. Incentives should be given on a reimbursement basis, upon supply of tax receipts for the work completed. The VGT may request information from proponents to confirm that incentives have been distributed appropriately (e.g. receipts).
- The VGT encourages \$1:\$1 matching contributions for project activities other than the provision of incentives but this is not mandatory.
- Have a nominated a project manager.
- Ensure that any relevant works on waterways permits (if required) are obtained.
- Check whether your activity is likely to impact on cultural heritage sites and attach appropriate paperwork or signoff if required.

INELIGIBILITY

Funding cannot be spent on:

- Project administration only.
- The purchase of capital items.
- Interstate travel.
- The costs associated with the establishment and maintenance of an organisation.
- Consultancy fees.

PROJECT ASSESSMENT

A panel comprising representatives from the VGT will assess applications on merit and make final recommendations for approval.

Following the assessment panel's recommendations, project activities and outcomes may be amended. This will be a consultative process between the VGT and the proponent to ensure project activities align with available funds.

Projects that include co-investment from other stakeholders are encouraged, although not a mandatory requirement.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

90% of the project grant will be paid upon acceptance of a signed Grant Agreement Form and an invoice with the correct grant amount and GST specified. The remaining 10% of the grant will be paid upon acceptance of the signed Project Completion Report and invoice for remaining funds.

TIMETABLE

Project activities must be completed and reported by the dates outlined in the table below:

Activity	2011/12 Financial Year
Applications open	25 June 2011
Applications close	5 August 2011
Successful applicants notified	19 August 2011
Signed agreements and first invoice submitted to the VGT	26 August 2011
Submit completion report & final invoice	1 July 2012 (or prior to)
Project assessed & final funding payment	1 July 2012

SUBMISSION OF PROJECT PROPOSALS

Project proposals should be submitted **by close of business 5 August 2011** to this email address:
info@vicgorsetaskforce.com.au

Please contact the VGT Executive Officer, Shane Herbertson on 03 5336 6844 if you require advice or further information.