



# Declared Plant Policy

*This policy relates to natural resources management under section 9(1)(d) of the Landscape South Australia Act 2019 (the Act), enabling co-ordinated implementation and promotion of sound management programs and practices for the use, development or protection of natural resources of the State. Specifically, this policy provides guidance on the use and management of natural resources relating to the prevention or control of impacts caused by pest species of plants that may have an adverse effect on the environment, primary production or the community, as per object s7(1)(f) of the Act.*

## cane needlegrass (*Nassella hyalina*)

Cane needlegrass is an unpalatable perennial tussock grass that superficially resembles native *Austrostipa* species and may invade unsown pastures or native vegetation with a grassy understorey. The management plan is based on the program for serrated tussock, as cane needlegrass is not yet present in South Australia.

### Management Plan for Cane Needlegrass

#### Outcomes

- Pasture and native vegetation protected from degradation by unpalatable invasive grasses.

#### Objectives

- Prevent the establishment of cane needlegrass in South Australia.

#### Best Practice Implementation

- Surveillance for infestations as part of routine inspection by landscape boards and Green Adelaide.
- Any infestations found to be delimited, contained and destroyed.
- Movement of machinery or fodder from an infested property to be monitored to contain any dispersal.

#### Regional Implementation

Refer to regional management plans for further details.

Region	Actions
Alinytjara Wilurara	Prevent entry or sale, destroy if detected
Eyre Peninsula	Prevent entry or sale, destroy if detected
Green Adelaide	Prevent entry or sale, destroy if detected
Hills and Fleurieu	Prevent entry or sale, destroy if detected
Kangaroo Island	Prevent entry or sale, destroy if detected
Limestone Coast	Prevent entry or sale, destroy if detected
Murraylands and Riverland	Prevent entry or sale, destroy if detected
Northern and Yorke	Prevent entry or sale, destroy if detected
South Australian Arid Lands	Prevent entry or sale, destroy if detected

## Declaration

To implement this policy, cane needlegrass is declared under the *Landscape South Australia Act 2019* throughout the whole of the State of South Australia. Its entry to South Australia, movement or transport on a public road by itself or as a contaminant, or sale by itself or as a contaminant are prohibited. Notification of infestations is necessary to ensure these are destroyed. Land owners are required to destroy any cane needlegrass plants growing on their land. Landscape boards and Green Adelaide are required to destroy plants on road reserves in their regions, and may recover costs from the adjoining land owners.

Cane needlegrass is declared in category 1 under the Act, for the purpose of setting maximum penalties and for other purposes. Any permit to allow its entry, road transport or sale can only be issued by the Chief Executive of the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) or their delegate pursuant to section 197.

Under the *Landscape South Australia (General) Regulations 2020*, Regulation 27 specifies the conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 186 and may transport wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying cane needlegrass on public roads, or bring them into the State. Regulation 28 specifies conditions under which a person is exempt from the operation of section 188(2) and may sell wool, grain or other produce or goods carrying cane needlegrass. Note that certain produce or goods may be excluded from these general movement and sale exemptions by Gazettal Notice of the Chief Executive, DEW.

The following sections of the Act apply to cane needlegrass throughout each of the regions noted below:

Sections of Act	Region								
	AW	EP	GA	HF	KI	LC	MR	NY	SAAL
186(1) Prohibiting entry to area	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
186(2) Prohibiting movement on public roads	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
188(1) Prohibiting sale of the plant	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
188(2) Prohibiting sale of contaminated goods	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
190 Requiring notification of presence	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
192(1) Land owners to destroy the plant on their properties	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
192(2) Land owners to control the plant on their properties									
194 Recovery of control costs on adjoining road reserves	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

## Review

This policy is to be reviewed by 2025 or in the event of cane needlegrass being found established in South Australia.

## Weed Risk

### Invasiveness

Cane needlegrass disperses by two types of seeds. Aerial seeds produced abundantly in panicles become attached to animals, clothing, and vehicles, or are blown by the wind. Stem fragments containing embedded stem seeds may be broken off and transported by passing animals or vehicles. Both types of seeds can be dispersed by movement of soil and water, and in contaminated produce, notably hay.

### Impacts

Cane needlegrass forms dense infestations in pasture, native grasslands and woodlands where it can exclude desirable species. The sharp-pointed seeds can cause injury to animals. It has only medium feed value to stock, and is not very palatable so tends to be allowed to increase as long as more palatable pasture species are present.

### Potential distribution

Cane needlegrass may grow in grasslands, pastures, woodlands and grass-dominated disturbed areas on fertile soils. In Victoria it has been found in riparian vegetation and areas subject to seasonal water-logging. Climate matching suggests that only high-rainfall regions of South Australia are at risk.

### **Feasibility of Containment**

#### Control costs

Permits exist for use of glyphosate, fluazifop and flupropanate for the control of cane needlegrass. Herbicide control would be expensive and labour intensive, as these are non-selective controls and it would be necessary to repeat treatment over several years and search for remaining needlegrass plants.

#### Persistence

Eradication of an incursion would be slowed by the long life of seeds in the soil and the difficulty of detecting all needlegrass plants among other grasses.

#### Current distribution

Cane needlegrass is absent from South Australia, but is naturalised in southern and central Victoria and inland parts of eastern New South Wales.

### **State Level Risk Assessment**

Assessment using the Biosecurity SA Weed Risk Management System gave the following comparative weed risk and feasibility of containment scores by land use:

<b>Land use</b>	<b>Weed Risk</b>	<b>Feasibility of control</b>	<b>Response at State Level</b>
Grazing - southern	low 29	very high 0	monitor
Native vegetation	negligible 8	very high 0	monitor

### **Considerations**

Cane needlegrass is native to South America (Argentina, south eastern Brazil, and Uruguay). It was first recorded in Australia between Glen Innes and Inverell, central New South Wales in 1951, and then in Victoria at Woodstock in 1964.

## cane needlegrass policy

Risk assessment indicates monitoring as a management action to detect and destroy any incursion of cane needlegrass in the State. Due to its absence from the State and very high feasibility of control, cane needlegrass is regarded as a State Alert Weed and a high priority surveillance target to increase the likelihood of early detection.

### **Synonymy**

*Nassella hyalina* (Nees) Barkworth, Taxon 39: 610 (1990)

Basionym: *Stipa hyalina* Nees, Fl. Bras. Enum. Pl. 2: 378 (1829)

### **References**

Gardener, M. R. & B. M. Sindel (1998) The biology of *Nassella* and *Achnatherum* species naturalised in Australia and the implications for management on conservation lands. *Plant Protection Quarterly* 13: 76-79.

Hon David Speirs MP

**Minister for Environment and Water**

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